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Race and Culture at HSPVA



Amidst national unrest and rising racial tensions, HSPVA promotes an environment where students can safely express ourselves through our art. However, the student perspective at HSPVA is vastly different when you are a person of color. Consequently, an entire subset of issues regarding race and culture have arisen at HSPVA among minority students.

As a black student, you learn to be hyper aware of these issues; it is uncomfortable when a teacher pressures you to speak on an issue concerning your entire race or when your department overlooks your art because no one can understand your perspective. These subtle, hurtful incidents are called microaggressions, which can compound into a larger problem over time. Our generation has been more vocal about these microaggressions, and one thing has been made clear: at HSPVA, we are not alone. With school only just beginning, our school's faculty has already taken action to ensure that student voices have a platform. The Race and Culture Student Forum, held on September 3rd, 2020, was an important step toward creating change at PVA for minority students. Our principal, Dr. R. Scott Allen, the Black Legacy of the Arts Chair, Kyra Hardwick, and ten brave students of color joined together to illuminate some key issues regarding race and culture at HSPVA.

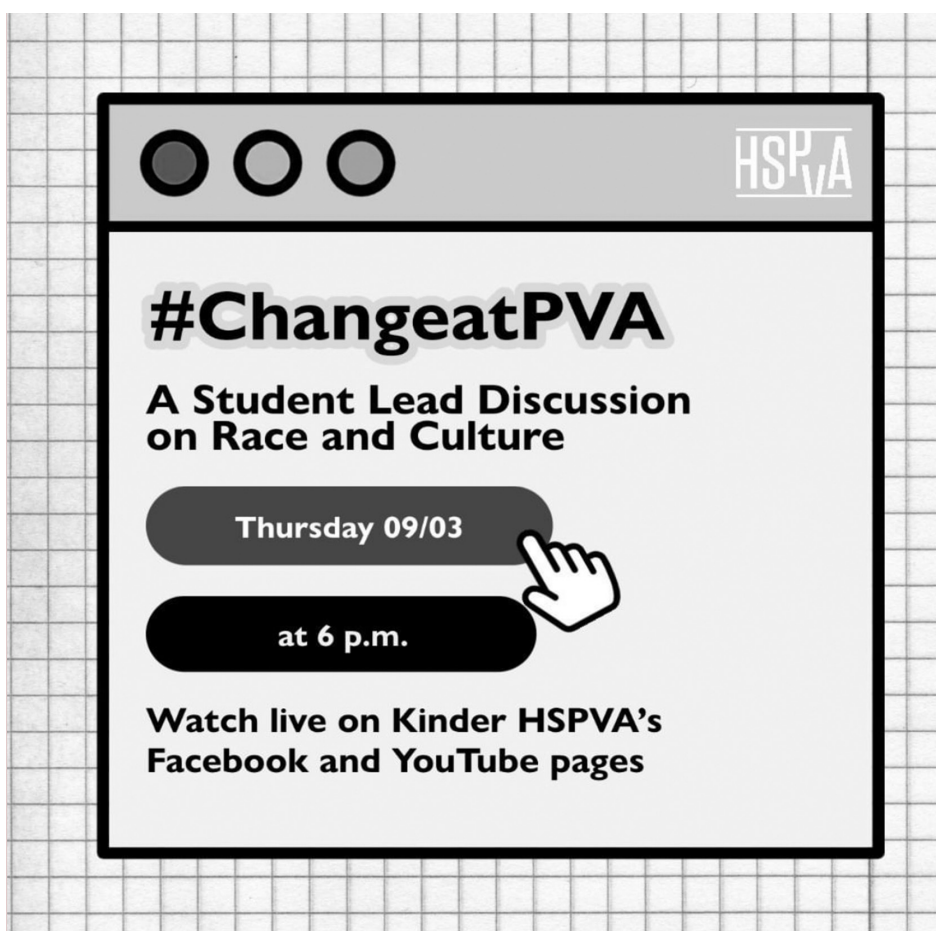
One central theme within this discussion was that being black means different things to different people. To Kael Juan (Theatre '21), the term "black" is one of power. "My mom is African and my father is American, so that's what I am. But 'black' is a little more charged. In a conversation like this, we're all black." "Blackness" represents a diverse group of people who share similar experiences as individuals in an inequitable system. We, however, are not a monolith: each person who identifies as "black" has a distinct perspective. Within our school, we must recognize the varied needs for such a diverse group of students. Amira Diaw (Visual Art '21) expanded on this idea: "Every time I get critiqued by someone who is non-black, I sense a hesitance." As is the case within many departments, underrepresentation among teachers can diminish the full potential of minority art. One tangible solution for this might be implemented in all art areas: "I wish for more inclusion of black professors, so we don't feel so shy to speak on our work or so that we

don't have to stick to our culture." With a more diverse set of teachers, students can let their art speak for itself rather than force it to speak for their entire race.

Joshua Garvin (Vocal '21) explained how limited perspectives among teachers also lead to misrepresentation of various cultures. "Artistry can't be done until you've done the work." Within the performing arts, "[we must] draw the line between appropriation vs. appreciation." Alissar Youssef (Theatre '21) provided one solution through her perspective as a first-generation Lebanese American: "It's okay to be curious about our culture, but come to us directly, so you don't perpetuate a stereotype." One-dimensional representation of diversity should not persist when more informed artistry is possible. For Dionne Bracey (Dance '21), "The little things matter." Often, even small changes can eliminate microaggressions, and these are changes that we are beginning to see at HSPVA. For example, when the dance department allowed dancers to wear flesh-toned pointe shoes, this was Dionne's reaction: "I was really happy when they showed us that they were listening and they cared." Listening is the first step toward growth, and perhaps the most poignant factor regarding change is that to achieve it, every person belongs in the conversation.

We must normalize uncomfortable conversations so that we can become more united, and at Kinder HSPVA, change is more than possible; it is inevitable.

By Elise Gentry



Letter from the Editor:

If you will be 18 on November 3rd, GO VOTE!!!

Sage Advice from the Seniors

Fear not freshmen! Getting adjusted to PVA and your new art areas can be quite the adjustment. So, paper* is bringing you some advice on how to ace your art areas from seniors in each department.

Creative Writing —

- Don't be afraid to be experimental with your work. Have you always wondered what a fantasy, romantic comedy play set in the 1950s would sound like?* Be the one to create that piece of work!
- Your first workshop will seem scary, but keep in mind that everyone is on your team to help you become a better writer.
- Participate in all the creative writing events! Off The Page is especially fantastic because of all the new energy and ideas each class brings to it, so represent the class of '24 with pride.
- Just because you are a writer doesn't mean you have to be introverted. Don't let the stereotypes fool you.

by Shelby Edison

Dance —

- Besides the whole dance department, your fellow freshmen dancers are your new family. Be supportive of one another. Remind each other of assignments. Help each other with homework.
- Be open to all the new dance styles you'll have the great opportunity of learning at PVA!
- Even though you might have lots of outside commitments with your dance studio, take advantage of all the amazing clubs at school and all the performances you can watch!
- Never give up! It's easy to be discouraged, especially with all the amazing dancers you're surrounded by, but YOU are amazing too. After all, you're at PVA ;)

by Alexa Halim and Kenidee Wedlaw

Mariachi —

- Keep up your grades to participate in all school mariachi related activities like concerts.
- Do not wait until the last minute to memorize your music.
- Make sure your uniform (traje) is steamed or ironed before every concert.
- Do not forget your instrument at home!
- Enjoy every concert; your time here will feel very short once you reach senior year.

by Jaylenn Holmes

Instrumental —

- Your art area teachers want you to succeed, and you'll be well on your way to ditching that pesky stage fright once you realize that.
- Be open to trying new ensembles.
- This sounds obvious, but class is more fun when you're familiar with your music. Even if all you can muster is a glance at it when you're rehearsing that day, it really is worth it.
- Cherish the concerts! I've come to learn that your concerts truly are numbered (especially now that we've lost so many this year), so enjoy them all.
- by Sarah-Grace Kimberly

Theatre —

- Always try to be cordial and kind to others, no matter how you feel about them. You don't have to be best friends; just don't be nasty. You never know who may be your next scene partner or stage manager.
- Trust yourself and trust your peers. No one is focused on you because they're too worried about themselves. No one is judging you, we promise! And if you are judging others, STOP right now! Judgement is the death of art as a wise acting teacher will soon tell you.
- As Chelsea Chilewa proclaims: it's not that deep. You don't need to overanalyze every single thing; just live in the moment. Notes and critiques are there to help you, so let them do their job.
- In the kindest way possible, you don't know anything. Okay... wait. You know a lot of things, you got into PVA after all! HOWEVER, you have so much to learn regarding theatre, life, and yourself. Be prepared to grow and learn. Take it all in.

by Rebecca Rock and Luca Jarosz

Vocal —

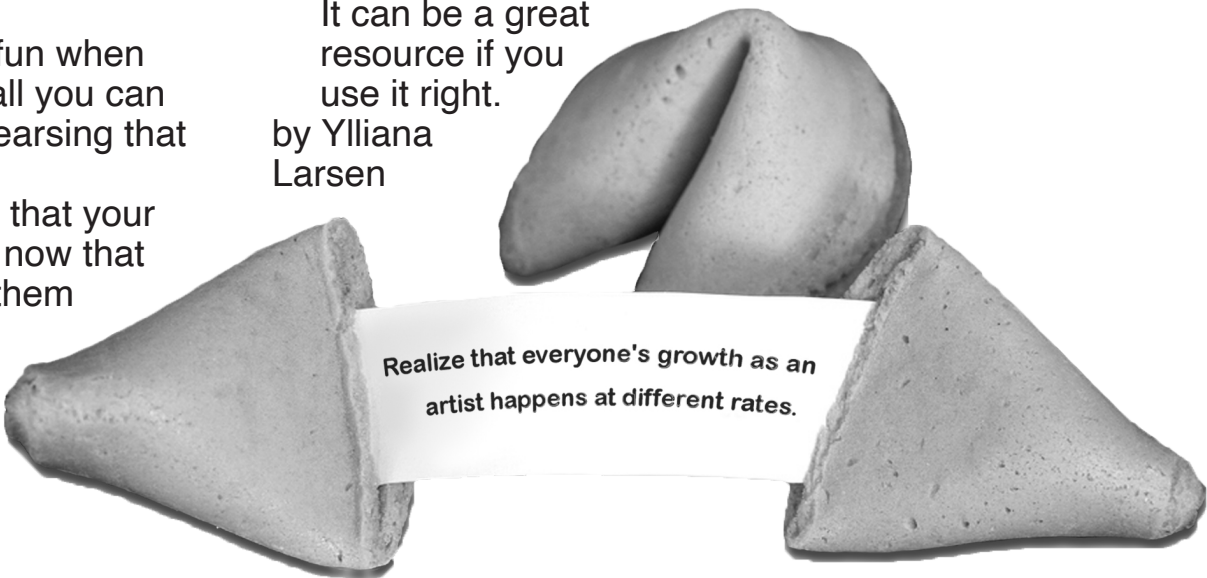
- Never chew gum in ANY vocal class
- Always remember that getting constructive criticism from your peers is one of the most helpful things when working on pieces.
- Realize that everyone's growth as an artist happens at different rates and to never compare yourself to classmates.
- Never bring a metal water bottle to class.

by Christine Rong

Visual Arts —

- Critique can be intimidating at first but it's just a useful step to improving your art. Nobody is attacking you personally.
- Experiment! Experiment! Experiment! Even if you think you won't like working in a certain medium you never know what you'll discover by branching out.
- Collaborate with other artists and maybe even other departments. The creative writers have work that needs illustrating.
- Don't be jealous! Art class is going to be more fun if you focus on your work instead of everyone else!
- Keep up with your journal or at the very least have a personal sketchbook. I'm still grabbing ideas from my freshman sketchbook. It can be a great resource if you use it right.

by Ylliana Larsen



*I reserve all rights to creating this particular play with the working title of "Love in the Time of Dragons and the Government Hopes You're Not a Communist."

Biden vs. Trump: What’s Their Policy?

By Matthew Kalmans

	Biden	Trump
Criminal Justice		
Should America defund the police?	No	No
Should America ban assault weapons?	Yes	No
Should the death penalty be allowed?	No	Yes
Should America allow private prisons?	No	Yes
Economy		
Should the economy shut down again due to COVID-19 if scientists advise it?	Yes	No
Should minimum wage be increased?	Yes	Unclear
Should the taxes for corporations be increased?	Yes	No
Education		
Should schools reopen amid the pandemic?	Yes	Yes
Should schools be gun-free zones?	Yes	No
Environment		
Should the US rejoin the Paris agreement?	Yes	No
Should the government take actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?	Yes	No
Foreign Policy		
Should the government increase military funding?	No	Yes
Should the United States military withdraw troops from the Middle East?	Yes	Yes
Healthcare		
Should abortion be legal?	Yes	No
Does Obamacare/Affordable Care Act benefit Americans?	Yes	No
Should importing prescription drugs be allowed to lower costs?	Yes	Yes
Immigration		
Should a border wall be built on the Mexican border?	No	Yes
Should there be a moratorium on deportations?	Yes	No
LGBTQ+		
Should there be work protection for LGBTQ+ people?	Yes	No
Should transgender people be permitted to serve in the military?	Yes	No

Remembering RBG

By Rebecca Rock

On Friday, September 18th, our nation lost one the most remarkable women of American history. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away after a lengthy battle with cancer and saddened the nation as a collective.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Ginsburg developed her independence and ambition at a young age. Graduating high school at only fifteen, she later earned degrees from Cornell University and Columbia Law School as a top student in each of these institutions. Ginsburg defied the odds when she was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1993 as the second woman, and the first Jewish woman, to serve in the highly esteemed position. A champion for women’s rights, RBG was instrumental in rulings to boost opportunities for women (like in the landmark case United States v. Virginia where she aided in striking down the discriminatory admission policy barring women from entering the Virginia Military Institute). RBG truly demonstrated the power of hard work and perseverance.

Such a dedication towards women’s rights is easily understood when considering the significant challenges RBG faced during her career. After tying for first rank at Columbia Law, RBG faced a number of obstacles in her way due to her sex when looking for jobs. Employers chose male candidates over her despite superb recommendations and a stellar academic record, including work on both Harvard and Columbia’s law reviews.

Through her powerful work in law and unapologetic strength and perseverance, RBG showed women around this country and world the limitless possibilities that may come with utter determination and a refusal to succumb to discriminatory practices. May RBG’s legacy be remembered and revered for many years to come.



Way back in March, I had some time to kill while not in school and became desperate to find some kind of longform media to fill my days. One thing led to another, my resolve crumbled, and many months later, I exited* quarantine a *Naruto* fan.

I expected a funny little shonen anime, and I *got* a funny little shonen anime *and* so much more. The characters are interesting, the fights have lovely choreography, there is no shortage of nice, admirable father figures, the music is nothing but timeless bangers, and the show is jam packed with all the good kinds of symbolism, foreshadowing, and character parallels. It's nothing short of an adventure.

Naruto tries to make friends with absolutely everyone he meets. By all accounts, this cycle of Naruto making friends should end up being unrealistic at best and boring beyond belief at worst, but you find yourself wanting Naruto to succeed! His ability to speak directly to people's hearts and help them realize their own capacity for good is—simply put—magical. And good for the soul.

It may also be important to note that *Naruto* is 40% filler. Yes, that does mean 76 episodes in a row of technically insignificant, plot-irrelevant content. Many people find this ridiculous and unnecessarily time consuming, but I don't have any issue with the filler content. I laughed. I cried. Not every episode has to send me into shock because *oh my god it was ***** the whole time!!!* Real *Naruto* fans watch the filler.

The problem I do have with *Naruto* is the treatment of characters like Choji... and the entire cast of female characters. Sakura, Ino, Tenten, and Hinata never get chances to truly shine amongst their peers. Choji is reduced to a single personality trait (liking food), and the characters closest to him rarely do anything but criticise his eating habits. This is gross for so many reasons! Additionally, as much as I am a fan of Jiraiya (find me anytime, I'll tell you why he has the best character design in the entire series), the "Pervy Sage" thing gets old *quick*.

At this point, I figure that most people have either seen *Naruto* or have absolutely no plans to watch it, and this is the point where I end the article and implore you: please, if you fall into that second category, watch *Naruto*.



Picnicking **Menil Park**

By Shelby Edison

Golden hour light spilling through tree branches and blades of grass. The summer heat slowly drifting away as an evening breeze takes over. A few melodic strums of a guitar from across the park. This is Menil Park, and you should have your next picnic here.

Was summer 2020 the summer of picnics? Yes. They happened to be one of the easiest ways to socialize and social distance at the same time. I picnicked in some of the various parks and picnic locations that Houston has to offer over the last few months, but I found that Menil Park was the superior picnic spot.

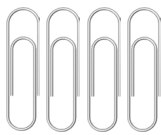
Menil Park seems to transport you out of metropolitan Houston to a small field next to a liberal arts college in Massachusetts where you and your friends read Shakespeare while sipping homemade lemonade.

In other words, the vibes are magnificent. Trees are scattered around the grass, providing plentiful shade for escaping the strong, Texas sun. For a small park nestled in the corner of Montrose, it's quite expansive with green space expanding across the street from the main park. There's plenty of street parking, plus the Menil's free parking lot a short block away. In the evening, golden hour hits the Menil with a blast of immaculate vibes, reminiscent of being the main character of a bildungsroman set in summertime.

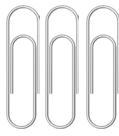
So, what are you waiting for? Pick up food curbside from your favorite local restaurant, spread out a blanket, kick off your shoes, sit six feet away from your best friends, and enjoy the last fleeting moments of summer bliss at the Menil. Say hi to me while you are at it; I promise you that I'll be there picnicking every single weekend.



Seeing other people's pets during online class



Going to a bunch of fun, virtual club meetings



Remembering to
check your school
email every day



Having to figure out college apps from home

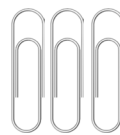


The Hub, PVA website, and gradebook all crashing on the first day of school

Movies & Theatres

The Flaws of Socially Distanced Movie Theatres (and also Tenet)

By Ian Dessauer



Like similar clickbait articles on the internet, I too risked my life to go watch a two and a half hour popcorn flick about time traveling James Bond. While the movie itself was entertaining, surprisingly the most interesting aspect of the entire experience was the design and organization of socially distant movie theaters. Easily the main issue most moviegoers had with sitting in a poorly ventilated box with strangers for two to three hours was the efficacy of theater protocol in maintaining a safe, yet pleasurable experience. After spending time at one of my local theaters, I believe that the social distance strategies at movie theaters aren't capable of preventing the spread of the virus if a positive carrier were to attend the same screening as you were.

At the theatre I attended, all patrons were required to wear a face mask in the lobby and in the auditoriums (unless eating and drinking), and auditoriums were at or under 50% capacity. To ensure social distancing within the auditorium, two seats were left in between each group. (My theatre also left an empty row in between each seated row which isn't stated in the theater chain's safety measures.) The regulations put a big emphasis on sanitizing the auditoriums between screenings as well as guest mindfulness (i.e. if you feel sick stay home and watch Netflix instead). The one fatal flaw that slices through proper social distancing efforts once you reach the auditorium is the seating system.

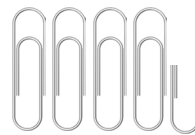
Normally when you go to a movie theater, you show up, sit in your reserved spot, and have to pass by others or allow others to pass by you. The latter part is what breaks most safety procedures. Let's say that you showed up early to a screening and sat towards the end of a row. You'd have to allow several other people to pass by you as they go to take their seat because in the wild west, free for all that is the movie theatre seating system, you can show up and sit down and get up and sit back down any time before or during a film. The only way I can see around this problem would be if everyone was seated at the same time through an airplane style entrance/exit procedure. However, theaters would then lose more revenue by being unable to showcase ads before a feature, and it's also very difficult to tell a stubborn Texan that they can't go to their movie because "they're late."

Another thing I noticed as I looked around during a rather slow portion of the movie was the lack of masks on most of the audience whether they were eating or not. Despite what the theaters may say, there are no employees walking up and down the aisles the whole time checking to see if the patrons are wearing masks. People do as they please, which means you're most likely in contact with most people in the theater (or at least your area). I could discuss this for pages, but I know our editors at paper* don't have the space to fit my deranged rants. It's funny because I actually enjoyed going back to the movie theater. Anyone who knows me knows I'm a huge cinephile and was waiting very patiently for movie theaters to reopen so I could sit down and see something on the big screen again. However, while the messy plot of *Tenet* and the movie popcorn was enough to satisfy me when I went to the theater, I'm not sure that I will return to theaters any time soon.

Footnote: If you can get over the movie's messy and convoluted logic or even just turn your brain off for a while, Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* is a stock filled two and a half hour action set piece that is fun to sit back and enjoy, even if it takes itself a little too seriously for basically time travelling James Bond.

I'm Thinking of Ending Things

By Will Newman



I'm Thinking of Ending Things is Charlie Kaufman's latest film, based on the novel by Iain Reid. The film, like all of Kaufman's work, is very arthouse and extremely eccentric, but has a wider release and bigger audience thanks to its home on Netflix and praised cast, including Toni Collette and Jesse Plemons. Just a fair warning, **I will be talking spoilers.**

I'm Thinking of Ending Things is a film about a young woman traveling with her new boyfriend to meet his parents who live on a secluded farm. That's how I'd describe the movie to someone if they asked me to give them an idea on the premise; however, this description is misleading. As the film goes on, it becomes more and more esoteric and jarring. If you watch this movie, be prepared to be confused for its entire run-time because Kaufman does not give you any answers. You are left to find them for yourself, and this is no easy task. After pondering the film and discussing it with a couple other friends who have seen it, I think I've figured out what the movie is trying to say.

The film intercuts between the couple on their way to the secluded farm and a janitor at a school who seems unrelated to the pair. The parallelism between the janitor and the male partner, Jake, leads me to expect that they are the same person and that the movie is from the janitor's point of view as he is reminiscing on his younger self. This is the key puzzle piece to understanding the film. Without this knowledge, the film is just a collection of strange dream-esque scenes that seemingly don't relate. .

Once you understand that this is all in the head of the janitor character, the real unanswered question becomes *who is this janitor?* and *how can we stitch together what his life was by analysing the scenes that Kaufman shows us?* Depending on the viewer, the film can be interpreted in a lot of different ways. I don't want to share much more because I think it's important for everyone to form their own opinion on it.

While I think this is a really great and unique movie, it still has its flaws which mainly lie in the pacing. The movie could have been a good 20-30 minutes shorter. *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* is definitely not for everyone, but it's a fun, mind boggling puzzle to solve and one of the best of the year.



Why We Should Diversify Our Narrative

By Christine Rong and Seva Raman

Breonna Taylor. Ahmaud Arbery. George Floyd. Elijah McClain. These names represent countless black lives that have been taken at the hands of ignorance and hatred in our country. Witnessing this wave of racial discrimination may lead one to wonder where such widespread prejudice originates. It all stems from education: what we learn in our English and social studies classes, what our state mandated textbooks teach us about the Native Americans, and what the images in our textbooks show us about Black Americans. We glorify figures like Christopher Columbus and repeat the pledge of allegiance, and only years later, do we find out the truth about our history. Simply put, racial bias, discrimination, and hate are all learned traits, whether it's learned from home or school. By introducing BIPOC authors and post-civil rights movement literature into schools, we can change the perspectives of the youth and promote more diverse views.

So what is Diversify Our Narrative? To give some context, Diversify Our Narrative (DON) was founded in California by two Stanford students in June 2020 with the intention to expand antiracist texts within the California curriculum. Now after 3 and ½ months, there are over 4,000 organizers nationwide with chapters that target their local school board, including one in HISD. So far, Diversify Our Narrative HISD's petition has almost 500 signatures and over 35 organizers involved with reaching out to students, alumni, teachers, and local organizations. HISD, like many districts, instructs teachers to assign specific pieces of literature and lesson plans from the state's mandated curriculum. Many of these resources are outdated and extremely eurocentric. The books represent experiences that are only centered around a majority of the population reading them which silences a variety of other perspectives. The books we currently read in school are written by white people about white people, and if there is an occasional POC character, they typically serve as a token character with a one-dimensional personality that does not effectively represent the realities of POC as a community. We no longer want POC youth to only learn and see people of color in places of oppression. Instead, we want to highlight their successes and learn about their culture and experiences.

Holding our district accountable for injustices that we've witnessed in the past starts with showing them where we feel change is needed and how we can facilitate it. A few of our demands include the implementation of a minimum of one book in every English/Literature and Composition class by a person of color AND about their experiences, at least one of the mandated books should be about Black experiences, due to the anti-Blackness that we've seen in our country from its birth, and these texts be analyzed to the same extent that any other traditional text would be analyzed in the classroom. Though these requirements seem minimal and relatively straightforward, districts across the country currently fail to consider the positive effects that they could have on our education system.

You may be asking yourself "What does this mean for me?" or "Why should I get involved?" At a school like PVA, our teachers aim to actively provide us with varied texts reflecting a multitude of cultures and backgrounds. Being exposed to diverse literature further allows us to view the experiences of specific communities and become better allies to oppressed minority groups. We have to recognize that though this is true for us, it is far from the reality at the majority of schools in HISD. We ask you to reflect on how reading *The House on*

Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros in Ms. Karakoç's class or analyzing *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson in Ms. Seward's class has provided you with insight into the experiences of BIPOC in America. Providing students with opportunities to read these books to promote healthy discussion around race is one of the most effective ways we can begin facilitating change when it comes to combating racism in America.

So what is next for Diversify Our Narrative HISD and how can you get involved? Our group is setting a goal of 4,000 petition signatures (www.diversifyournarrative.com/petitions) by the end of this year, and we will be presenting this list of demands to the school board as soon as we reach our goal. To get more involved, you can become an organizer and directly help out with contacting teachers in the district, local organizations, schools, and clubs. Diversify Our Narrative HISD also strives to use its social media platforms to raise awareness of the racial inequities in HISD and to educate on how to combat these issues in the future.

Getting involved in Diversify Our Narrative and diversifying our school curriculums is only one step towards combating internalized racism and doing your part. There many more ways to get involved such as working at the polls, phone banking, and working with other activist groups and local candidates. Educating yourself, being proactive about these issues, and having meaningful discussions with your friends and family are all crucial to developing an open-minded and a more active youth. As we progress, it is important for us to remember that at the end of the day, we are responsible for the changes we want to see in the future. It is our job to ensure that racial inequities are no longer present to future generations.

For more information, feel free to reach out to either Christine or Seva or dm the Instagram **@diversifyournarrativehisd** to get involved.



Dear Social Media: An Open Letter to Anyone Who Tries to Show Me the Silver Lining of This Pandemic

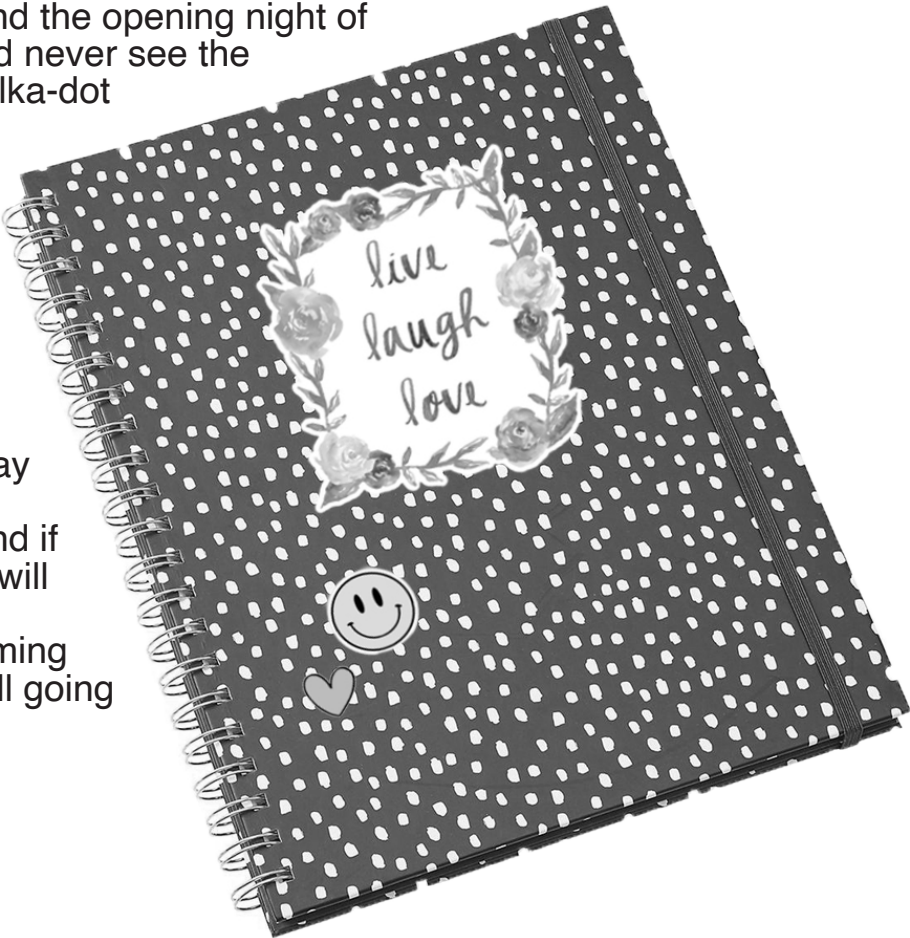
by Alexandra Champion

insert the harp music from TikTok You have to stop glorifying the pandemic. It’s not cute. Frankly, it’s incredibly misleading and counterproductive for the country right now. You have to stop selling everyone this idea of toxic positivity and telling everyone that quarantine has been a “blessing in disguise.” No one actually thinks that. We all just had the rug ripped out from under us for a good six months. I’m not really interested in your six different banana bread recipes, @randomoversaturatedpositivityaccount. I’m not really interested in listening to some random Tik Tok try to convince me that this six month ordeal has actually been good for me and my “growth as a person.”

This idea that everyone has all the time in the world to be super productive and get everything done early is incredibly annoying to a procrastinating high school senior. Don’t show me four different ways to organize my “personal online classroom” or try to convince me that a 2020-2021 planner is a stellar idea because there are SO many cute prints! Firstly, I barely have enough energy to drag myself two feet across my room to my desk. Secondly, my main source of sadness during Spring of 2020 was glancing across my planner and seeing things like the Europe trip, my birthday party, and the opening night of Bernarda Alba penciled in, knowing that those events would never see the light of day. So — no. I will not be buying an overpriced, polka-dot planner from an Instagram ad because some company is trying to convince me that there is any use in planning anything up until a few days before. Everything I planned for six months got cancelled within a matter of weeks.

You have to quit with the cute, little Insta stories with quotes like, “Maybe 2020 isn’t the worst year of our lives...maybe it’s the year we find our truest selves,” (I just made that quote up, but imagine I was saying this to you in a hushed tone, while holding your hands and making way too much eye contact). Also — if I hear one more person say “these are crazy, unprecedented times,” I am going to lose my marbles. It was cute in March — it’s now September, and if someone else tries to talk to me about this “new normal,” I will be pulling all my hair out.

Stop with the toxic positivity and the productivity-shaming and the shallow Instagram quotes. This sucks, and we’re all going to need a few new Netflix shows to come out.



Teacher Talk

by Mr. Landry

There once was a time known as the summer of 2020. Now that it seems like it was eons ago, we thought it might be nice in this episode of Teacher Talk to share some tales of old. Welcome back, students, to Kinder HSPVA and best of luck as you try to match the summer activity to the teacher!

1) Sr. Alarcón	A) I bought bicycles for my children and taught them how to use them without ever using training wheels.
2) Ms. Karakoc	B) I bought a lot of cake tips and practiced decorating cupcakes and cakes with my daughter!
3) Mr. Krueger-Miller	C) I took my kids to the beach. It was the one and only time we came out of quarantine for something fun, so it was special.
4) Mr. Landry	D) Not being able to travel anywhere, I was able to focus on buying a new home after 15 years of living in the same place. The best of it is that I am seven minutes away from school!!!
5) Mr. McCommis	E) I started painting my house.
6) Ms. Mouton	F) Transferred my old cassette mix tapes to MP3 files.
7) Sr. Perez	G) My wife, our two dogs, and I camped all summer either in a tent or in the back of our truck. We climbed eleven 14,000+ ft mountains and two sacred Navajo peaks. We found some awesome secret spots to get away from cell phone service and other people.
8) Ms. Phillips	H) Bought a microphone for home karaoke.
9) Ms. Switek	I) I baked a lot of sourdough and perfected a Kouign-Amann recipe.
10) Mr. Waddell	J) I discovered a little pond filled with turtles in Hermann Park!!!

What TikTok Means for the Music Industry

by Julian Cotom

In March of 2019, American rapper Montero Lamar Hill, commonly known as Lil Nas X, released the country rap single “Old Town Road” which gained massive popularity on the app Tik Tok; it went viral pretty fast. Once it went big on Tik Tok, the song topped charts internationally, making it go diamond-certified. Before this series of events, no one had any idea who Lil Nas X was. Now his name is common knowledge. This begs the question: what does Tik Tok have to do with the future of anything related to the music industry?

Songs that get popular on Tik Tok get popular outside of the app; people like the fifteen seconds they hear on the app, so they check out the song in full, giving the artist the recognition and streaming needed. Songs like “Supalonely”, “No Idea”, and “death bed (coffee for your head)” all gave their respective artists recognition and more fans. These artists were discovered by a majority of their fans on the app. This means that new and rising artists can use Tik Tok to their advantage by spreading the word on the app to get their song trending. Once it trends on Tik Tok, they gain more streams on other platforms, and their fan base grows. It’s a great system to put yourself out there and get your work noticed.

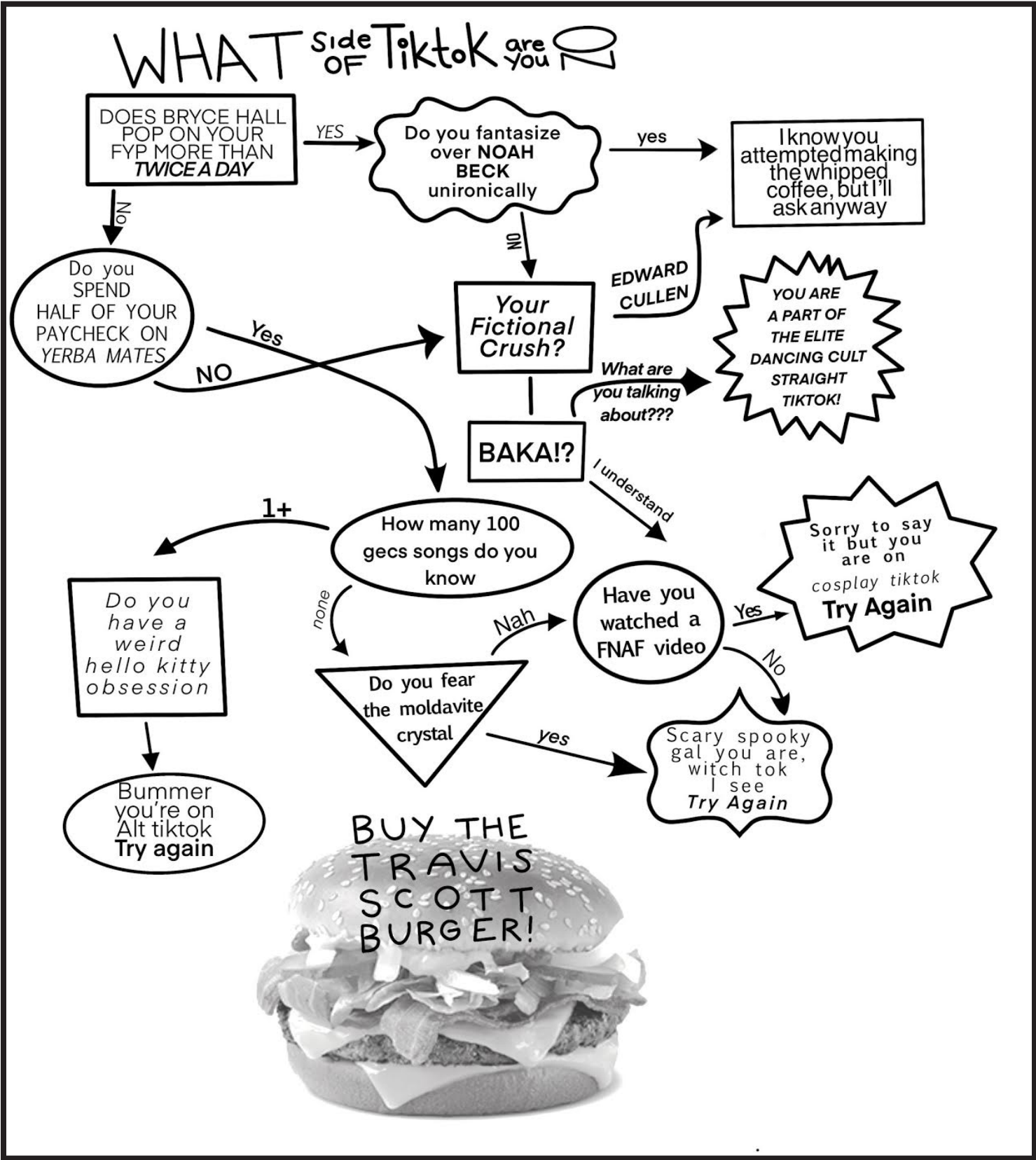
However, this system also has some disadvantages.

Take for example Drake’s “Toosie Slide.” Drake is an artist who busted the system so wide that he is apparently no longer capable of making bad music. When “Toosie Slide” dropped, it was obvious that it was made to be a Tik Tok dance. At the time, quarantine and lockdown themed songs were on the market, and Drake knew that. And as predicted, the song went viral, and then it topped the charts. This is bad news because since this worked, it would be possible to make a lazy trendy song and have it get viral with no intention of sparking inspiration in other people, having the sole purpose of making money and earning clout. And Drake is already an artist that doesn’t need anymore fame, so this takes the spotlight away from aspiring artists who have a passion for their art.

The music industry is already as rough as it is, and streaming platforms like Spotify are starting to set deadlines for album releases that make it more of a chore than an art to put out music. Tik Tok could at least give new artists the boost of credibility they need before they get sent out into the harsh world of “producing for profiting.” But it can also breed lazy musicians and get them famous for just making a song for the app. But for now, artists must rely on this platform in order to reach the screenager generation in hopes of making a name for themselves to become the next Lil Nas X.

What Side of TikTok Are YOU On?

by Jordan Sheldon and Chelsea Chilewa
formatted by Ylliana Larsen



New Kids on the Block

by Kate-Yeonjae Jeong and Luca Jarosz

Let’s face the facts here. Building relationships and socializing over Microsoft Teams isn’t the easiest thing. With a multitude of Wi-Fi errors, microphone problems, and cameras not being enabled, it’s a little hard to get to know the new faces that are in our classrooms... well, virtual classrooms. However, Kinder HSPVA boasts 6 new faculty members this year, and we think they deserve a little more spotlight to introduce themselves.* Let’s get right into meeting these new faces:

Angela Rosales (Biology)
What subject do you teach? What inspires you most about this subject?

I teach Pre-AP and AP Biology. What inspires me about the subject is this idea that we are all connected in this thing we call life. That we are all one big play or painting that we can star in and help narrate. It’s like one big team whose goal is to survive and make our species better for the future.

Your favorite book, hobby, and advice to give? Also, your theme song, dream vacation destination, and go-to comfort food?

My favorite book? Perks of Being a Wallflower. Hobby? Oil Painting. Advice? Everything happens for a reason. Theme song? “Superman” by Lazlo Bane. Dream Vacation? Galapagos Islands. Comfort food? Mozzarella sticks.

If we were in the world of Harry Potter, which house do you think you would be sorted in at Hogwarts?

I have actually taken the Pottermore test, and I am a Hufflepuff.

What is your deepest, darkest secret, relative to all your other deep, dark secrets that are neither too deep nor too dark to publish in a school newspaper?

This one’s difficult... my secret would be that I have social anxiety. It’s not really a secret now because I embrace who I am now as an adult, but it’s something that I have and work through every day.

Khoa Pham (Geometry)
What subject do you teach? What inspires you most about this subject?

I teach geometry now. Done right, geometry can teach someone to think critically and analyze the facts and fictions around them. That would be the philosopher in me speaking. The more pragmatic side is screaming, “TRIGONOMETRY!!” at the top of their lungs! It may be hard for students in it to see it, but taking a step back, it’s fascinating how powerful a tool trig is despite its “basic” origins.

Your favorite book, hobby, and advice to give? Also, your theme song, dream vacation destination, and go-to comfort food?

I have yet to find the right book that has really stuck with me. I’m hoping to find one. I LOVE swimming. I’ve done laps in the pool for two-plus hours just stuck in my thoughts on many occasions. Thank goodness for 24-hour gyms! I am not sure if this counts as advice, but the quote “Hard work beats talent if talent doesn’t work hard,” is something I stick by and keeps me going. I wouldn’t say that it’s a theme song but Years and Years’s “Shine” is a bop and is #1 on my 2019 Spotify list. I’ve taken several trips to Italy, and if I could, I’d never leave. SNICKERDOODLE COOKIES AND COFFEE ICE CREAM.

If we were in the world of Harry Potter, which house do you think you would be sorted in at Hogwarts?

I took the test on Pottermore. I am a Gryffindor. I have a phoenix feather wand (which was something I was really excited about). And my Patronus is a fox which actually has a significance to me personally as well so that was totally rad.

What is your deepest, darkest secret, relative to all your other deep, dark secrets that are neither too deep nor too dark to publish in a school newspaper?

I, for legal reasons, MAY be swayed by snickerdoodle cookies and coffee ice cream.

Rachel Williames (Algebra)
What subject do you teach? What inspires you most about this subject?

I teach math. Specifically algebra. This year I teach Algebra I, Algebra II, and College Prep Math which is also mostly algebra. I like math because of its accuracy. I like knowing when I get to the end that I’m right. There’s a lot of satisfaction in that. I like how there are many creative ways, not just one as we’re sometimes led to believe, to get to that final answer. But more importantly than all of those things, I like how math helps us to explain the world and to see patterns. The patterns that we work with in algebra explain events both small and large, such as the spread of the coronavirus.

Your favorite book, hobby, and advice to give? Also, your theme song, dream vacation destination, and go-to comfort food?

I love The Giving Tree; hobbies have a tie between cooking, yoga and Taekwondo; my favorite advice is to moisturize with an SPF. “Black Bird”. South Korea. Kimchi jjigae(stew).

If we were in the world of Harry Potter, which house do you think you would be sorted in at Hogwarts?

I have taken a test, and my son thoroughly agrees I am a Ravenclaw...*sigh* :(

Jeff Turner (Librarian)
What subject do you teach? What inspires you most about this subject?

The Library! It’s a seriously cool place. The fact that I get to help you guys become information literate inspires me. And what is Information Literacy you may ask? It’s when you recognize when info is needed and then have the ability to locate it, evaluate it, and effectively use it. Oh, and also giving you guys great books to read for your own enjoyment!

Your favorite book, hobby, and advice to give? Also, your theme song, dream vacation destination, and go-to comfort food?

Asking a librarian their favorite book is an impossible question because it can change weekly. Here’s a start: A Walk Across America, by Peter Jenkins; To Kill A Mockingbird, by Harper Lee; The Clan Of The Cave Bear series, by Jean Auel. Of course there are many others! Hobbies include wearing my kilts (I have five), playing piano, traveling, and being with my dog. And traveling WITH my dog is THE BEST! The best advice I like to give is simply this: Be kind. My theme song is from the early 70’s. It’s “Shambala” by Three Dog Night. It makes me happy. My next dream vacation I think is going to be touring the northern and southern islands of New Zealand. I love me some Lord of the Rings settings! Go-to comfort food? Well when we get back face to face you will see that I’m a pretty big guy so I haven’t missed many meals, but I think I would have to say pasta with pesto sauce would make me happier than a camel on Wednesday.

If we were in the world of Harry Potter, which house do you think you would be sorted in at Hogwarts?

Gryffindor, duh.

What is your deepest, darkest secret, relative to all your other deep, dark secrets that are neither too deep nor too dark to publish in a school newspaper?

Well, this brings me supreme embarrassment to say, but I can’t whistle.

*we will introduce the rest of our new teachers in our next issue

Pressure to Better Yourself During the Pandemic

By Mariah Adeeko

Let's be honest: you've faced a lot of pressure from this pandemic. Maybe you've felt the need to master a new hobby now that you have all this freetime or for seniors to finally start on your college essay prompts...but there's one common pressure connector I've seen in students, friends, and family alike: bettering yourself. See if any of these feel or sound familiar: I remember talking to a family member who said she needed to lose at least ten pounds of vanity weight before she returned to her workplace. PVA senior Ellis Wilkins-Haverkamp told me he felt the need to "keep up conversations with certain people" though these conversations are actually taxing for him. I'm guilty of this pressure as I feel the need to somehow come up with a magical fix for my generalized anxiety, so I can come back to campus refreshed and free of any mental health issues.

Stop. Staying at home during the pandemic can be a time to better yourself, but it does not have to be. No one is expecting you to come out of this a person ten times better than you were before our abrupt departure; take this time to care for yourself instead of trying to fix your image for other people. In the end, if you're not changing for yourself, it won't be worth it!

If you're still stuck, here are some actually fun things I've tried during quarantine that have helped take this pressure off my conscience!

- Journaling
- Picking up photography (if you have a professional camera, even better!)
- Visiting different parks (the Menil and Memorial Park are two of my favorites)
- Redecorating rooms around the house (put up fairy lights, repaint doors, etc.)

Zan's Mixtape

By Zander Tate

COVID-19 has changed every aspect of our lives, yet music continues to be there to help us through these abnormal times. Here's a collection of songs that have come out since lockdown started which highlight the range of feelings we have experienced on our 6 month Spring Break:

“From a Lover’s Point of View” by Zach Bryan — Zach Bryan’s new album is full of raw emotion and warm soundscapes, so if you’re into folk country, cozy up to his raspy voice and tales of lost love.

“Woodlawn” by Aminé — Though his new project doesn’t have a big hit like his last two albums, “Woodlawn” is an upbeat track with a wild beat that provides some much needed optimism.

“Betty” by Taylor Swift — T. Swift’s surprise album really got me through this purgatory of a summer. Hating on Taylor is not cool and never was, and now with *Folklore*, she has given the world a reason to **love** her.

“T.D.” by Lil Yachty & Tierra Whack feat. A\$AP Rocky & Tyler, the Creator — Rap needed a new posse cut, and surprisingly Lil Yachty delivered by uniting some of the most cultured stars on one song. Even if you don’t like rap, Tierra Whack’s verse is ridiculously awe-inspiring.

“Heartless” by Diplo feat. Morgan Wallen — Though country pop is one of the most hated genres out there, Diplo’s production skills mixed with Morgan Wallen’s smooth talkin’ country boy voice make this a true singalong song meant to be blasted out of car windows.

“Savage — Remix” by Megan Thee Stallion feat. Beyoncé — Before a different Megan song came out, this was the song of the summer in Houston. This will truly go down as a classic in Houston music history as these two legends united on a track.

“Backyard Boy” by Claire Rosinkranz — Tiktok ruled music this summer, and while many songs are just a 15 second jingle, “Backyard Boy” is well composed, super fun, and just as catchy as it is upbeat.



“Alot of Thems” by BBY KODIE — I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: BBY Kodie is the next big thing out of Houston. While quarantine has shut down the live shows that have built his hype, he’s released strong singles this summer and he has more on the way.

“Relación — Remix” by Sech feat. Daddy Yankee, J Balvin, ROSALÍA, & Farruko — This song sounds like dancing at parties and a good time, so even if we can’t congregate right now, this is a perfect song to jam out to in your room.

Listen to the playlist using the QR code below!



Take-Out with Maddie

By Maddie Strug

Because a lot of us don't really feel safe dining in at a restaurant right now, I want to highlight some of my favorite local businesses all around Houston. Some of us need to realize there's more restaurants than Whataburger, and it's important to keep these businesses afloat during this hard time because Houston has some of the best restaurants in the country. I hope y'all try some of these out, and I've tried to include something for everyone!

Golden Bagels

Located on: 3119 White Oak Drive
Houston, TX 77007

What to get: Classic Salmon Lox on ET Bagel

As a Jew, bagels are a staple in my food arsenal. First off, let me just say this place has the cutest vibe and lots of outdoor seating. I got the Classic Salmon Lox on the Everything Bagel. Now, this is a bit of a pricey bagel, but it's huge. It's stuffed with fresh lox and veggies and also comes with a side of fruit. You could definitely pop this in the fridge and enjoy it for a 2nd meal. They also have fantastic flavored cream cheeses, such as honey habanero, and my favorite, maple pecan. If you love a good bagel, I totally recommend you check this place out.

Green Seed Vegan

Located on: 4320 Almeda Rd, Houston, TX 77004

What to get: Lil Red BBQ and The Cali

Wow, this place is really great! Green Seed Vegan is a black owned business and has tons of amazing vegan food at a low price. The service was very fast and our takeout was available 10 minutes after ordering. For anyone skeptical about vegan food, try this place. I got "The Cali" which was a fried veggie chicken sandwich. It was absolutely delicious. The veggie-based meat substitute tasted so real, like honestly I wouldn't guess it was vegan. I love the vegan mayo and aolis used on most dishes, and I'd also recommend getting the sweet potato dill fries. Seriously this place is a game changer, try it ASAP!

Antidote Coffee

Located on: 729 Studewood St, Houston, TX 77007

What to get: Almond milk latte, Chai tea latte, and baked goods.

This is one of my family's favorite coffee shops when we lived in The Heights, so I had to include it. This place has a great aroma, lots of outdoor seating for pets, and it's just a great place to relax. They are doing a really good job keeping customers safe from COVID, only allowing 2 customers in at a time, and the coffee is so good. My go to is an iced almond milk latte, but honestly anything on the menu is delicious and affordable. They also have freshly baked pastries in store every day. Their sister shop is Black Hole in Montrose, and it has the same options. Ditch Starbucks and visit a local coffee shop!

Betsy's

Located on: Evelyn's Park 4400 Bellaire Blvd Bellaire, TX 77401

What to get: Breakfast tacos, Pesto rice bowl with chicken.

Betsy's is a go to in my book. Located in a park, it has plenty of outdoor seating as well as take out options. The breakfast is incredible and very affordable. They have great, light and healthy food that will make you feel like an Instagram Influencer. Also if you're on a budget, their kid's meals slap (grilled cheese and fries... but I didn't tell you). It's also a super cute spot for a date night or picnic with friends. Definitely check it out!



Congrats to Artist Academy's Team Choi*

For Winning the Virtual Scavenger Hunt!

Team Members: Madelyn Munz, Zella Price,
Carmina Andrade, Harry Barnett, Alec Boutte, Valentino Dzul,
Adrian Gomez, John Hebert, Sophia Hernandez, Lali Snell,
Mariana Valdes

**Now that y'all are used to the fame of seeing your name in paper*, submit some articles and Overheards to add to your school newspaper related clout.*

Horoscopes

By Maja Neal

It's a shame, I know; I've already done September signs in the Artist Academy issue. But that doesn't mean I have any shortage of advice. You'll have to pry this job from my cold, dead hands. Speaking of which - it's October! So, here are your horoscopes:

Aries — Mars will be hanging around you, and that should bring energy, work, and independence. It's okay to be a little hyper — as long as you focus and control it. Advice: learn the art of taking micro-naps.

Taurus — Work sucks!! There's no way around that. However, you might be happier to hear that the end of the month will bring a personal matter's resolution. Advice: stomp around in high heels just for the vibes.

Gemini — Maybe you want to be careless this month, or you're apathetic about work. Remember, you can do a good job without being rushed. Advice: go outside and eat the first mushroom you see. Trust me.*

Cancer — You'll have to expend most of your energy on outside factors, like work and supporting your friends. But you won't mind that too much; you're good at what you do. Advice: hold a little frog in your hand.

Leo — Thinking about spending? STOP IT. Because you'll be doing a lot at once, impulse decisions and retail therapy may be tempting, but always sleep on it. Advice: pretend you're dead for a bit. It's therapeutic.

Virgo — Next month is a rich one for you — interpersonal relationships are strengthened and you should keep a guard on your finances. But most importantly, remember to relax. Advice: the baby from Eraserhead.

Libra — It's almost your time! Focus on physical health and personal values — in other words, use this boost of power towards a self-checkup to make sure you're not falling into harmful habits. Advice: listen to the Lo-Fi Halloween Mix.

Scorpio — Things at home, or with authority figures in general, may be tense or just out-of-touch. In response, spend time with your chosen family instead! Friends, in my experience, heal all wounds. Advice: let your bones dissolve.

Sagittarius — Though it might be hard, considering how active you are socially, being introspective is important. Enjoy aloneness as it keeps you in touch with yourself. Advice: go to your local shelter and communicate telepathically with a cat.

Capricorn — You may be hit by a bout of indecisiveness. To clear your head, start a new project and throw yourself into it. Advice: Save the Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus!

Aquarius — Try to be a little more compassionate next month — it never hurts. Plus, you might find yourself occupied with thoughts of travel or new people - it's okay to indulge that, as much as you can in the time of Corona. Advice: Watch *Scream* (1996). It is October.

Pisces — Look around for opportunities to make money — it'll be a good month for that. It's also good that you'll be more prone to solving interpersonal issues with calm and understanding, rather than snap judgements. Advice: plant your change to grow a money tree.



Little Known, (Sometimes) Embarrassing Facts

About the paper* Editors

Did you know that **Shelby** is a die-hard Taylor Swift fan, or Swiftie as they are called? Or that she has misspelled Luca's name not once, but twice (!), while formatting paper*?

Did you know that **Luca** can't swim? Or that his asthma was so severe when he was younger, that laughing would trigger an asthma attack (which happened often)?

Did you know that **Rebecca** had a mullet as a child courtesy of her older brother and his scissors? Or that her grandfather invented the powdered sugar commonly seen on doughnuts?

Did you know that **Ylliana** was terrified of the show Oobi when they were a small child? It's that show with the eyeball hands, if you know you know.



* paper* advises you not to try this piece of advice out

Overheard@PVA

I'm having a **bowl of cucumbers**, and then I'm gonna go cry.
— Gryphon Alhonti

We should do an **ASMR** radio play.
— Philip Hulten

Do you guys mind if I practice my **British accent** while reading this?
— Ms. D

There are two kinds of people: **vegans and Americans**.
— KM

I too, as a vegetarian, love eating **straight up leaves**.
— Charlotte Stallings

I'm having **deja vu**.
— Deja Bracey

I'm having **deja vu**.
— Deja Bracey

"God I need a **Michael Buffblé** in my life"
— Caroline Paden

Dude, I loved my **abacus**.
— Eli Johns-Krull

When you say you hate *the energy* we created in the studio, you mean like the *HGO studio*?
— Elena Oliveira

Coalition *wants* to be Common App.
— Ms. Farris

I live to *make you angry*.
— McKenna Leach

I need you to say something right now so I can **submit it to Overheads**.
— Shelby Edison

Our dogs can talk to each other *through Zoom*.
— Mr. Hune

I'm really good at touching my **eyeball**.
— Kira Gianetti

Pieper is the **goddess** of creative writing.
— Alessa Perez

Knowing you, Eliot, I sometimes ever so slightly doubt if you ate the snack or **an actual living goldfish**.
— Dana Combate

I will play with my toys 'til the day I die.
— Riya Shah

I'm having **deja vu**.
— Deja Bracey

Fellas, I got the **charisma of God**.
— Ellis Wilkins-Haverkamp

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Follow us on Instagram and Twitter ***@hspvapaper*** for more paper* shenanigans!

paper*
Staff

Contributing Writers: Mariah Adeeko, Alexandra Champion, Chelsea Chilewa, Julian Cotom, Ian Dessauer, Elise Gentry, Alexa Halim, Jaylenn Holmes, Kate-Yeonjae Jeong, Matthew Kalmans, Sarah-Grace Kimberly, Mr. Landry, Maja Neal, Will Newman, Seva Raman, Christine Rong, Celeste Schmidt, Jordan Sheldon, Maddie Strug, Zander Tate, and Kenidee Wedlaw
Emotional Support: Matthew Kalmans

Editor-in-Chief: Shelby Edison
Mangaging Editors: Luca Jarosz and Rebecca Rock

Media Extraordinaire: Ylliana Larsen