

Dr. Wolpe Exposes Ethical Dilemmas

By FELICIA HO (IV)

On Friday, November 18, in a talk on bioethics at the 2016 John Hanly Lecture on Ethics and Morality, Dr. Paul Root Wolpe explored the question of whether ethical decisions should be made from the heart or from the mind.

A professor of Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Neuroscience and Biological Behavior, and Sociology, Dr. Wolpe is the Director of the Center for Ethics at Emory University, and has earned numerous recognitions for his work in the field of bioethics.

Dr. Wolpe outlined his own definition of ethics as “how we develop, assess, and express our values in the world.” In this definition, he debunked the common misunderstanding that ethics is solely about choosing between right and wrong. Instead, Dr. Wolpe said, “Real life ethical de-

the other tracks.

Dr. Wolpe explained that most people would pull the lever, since saving the greatest number of lives seems more rational. However, when this problem was modified so that one must directly push a person onto the tracks in front of the incoming trolley in order to stop the trolley and save five people, the response was different.

As students thought about their choices, Dr. Wolpe emphasized that, as humans, we have different emotional responses to pulling a lever and indirectly causing someone's death and pushing someone directly onto the tracks, thus directly causing his or her death in order to save others.

Using several MRI brain scans of participants solving these problems, Dr. Wolpe explained how the frontal cortex was active in the first problem's rational decision making, while the emotional center of the brain was active in the modified problem.

To conclude the assembly, Dr. Wolpe paraphrased Aristotle's view of ethics: “People should do what is right not only because they ought to, but because they want to.” By learning to adopt character traits that will lead to moral behavior, everyone should be able to make ethical decisions in accordance to their own personal moral values, as is reflected in the Pingry Honor Code.

Dr. Wolpe left students and faculty with a new outlook on ethics and morality, encouraging everyone to start asking the question, “What kind of person should I be?”



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isions are almost always right versus right, or a conflict between two desired values or principles.”

To better illustrate the complexity of ethics, Dr. Wolpe introduced the study of “trolleyology” in the field of ethics. In the classic trolley problem, five people are tied to train tracks with an incoming trolley; if one were to pull the lever, the tracks would switch and the trolley would only kill one person tied to

Students and Faculty Both Star in Fall Play

By JONATHAN CHEN (IV)

On the nights of November 10th, 11th, and 12th, the Upper School Drama Department performed its annual fall play, *Scenes from American Life*, a play by A.R. Gurney in Macrae Theater.

Directed by Mr. Albert Romano, the highly-anticipated play lived up to high expectations, and the cast and crew put on a spectacular and well-received performance. It featured a total of 30 scenes split between two acts.

Mr. Romano said, “What's different about this year's play when compared to last year's was that this particular group of kids were the nicest, kindest, most open group I have ever worked with. They were committed, had a high degree of talent, and provided so much support to each other. The faculty and students were role models to each other, with everyone taking risks and going out of their comfort zones.”

The hardest parts were the difficulties and obstacles faced each day. “There never was a day where we weren't solving a problem,” Mr. Romano recalled. “The hard part was that we never knew the problem in advance.”

Mr. Tony Asch, Mrs. Jane Asch, and Mr. Romano created the mood with the well-arranged and realistic set. They used a projector, as they needed a variety of different sets to match the scenes. Mr. Romano said, “Because we had a projector, we only needed the central elements of the scene, which included objects like chairs, tables, and telephones, to compliment the slides. The lighting was purely to isolate the actors and paint the atmosphere.”

Scenes from American Life, as its title suggests, depicted scenes from American lives. Each scene ranged from about two to eight minutes each. This allowed each actor to play multiple different parts, as each actor's character changed from scene

to scene. While there were no definitive leads, the senior cast members of the fall production — Connor Beard, Emma Claire Marvin, Katharine Matthias, Jessie McLaughlin, Maddy Shiels, Kayla Thau, and Laurny Rodney — not only played featured roles but also served as leaders for the rest of the student cast. Behind the scenes, the senior crew members

ulty members. A total of ten faculty members were cast in the play, including the Headmaster. Mariah Smith (IV) said, “The teachers were a really good touch because it made the scenes more realistic and fun to watch. It was hilarious seeing the people we know as educators acting totally different!”

Alessia Zanolini (IV) said,

Kevin Ma (IV) said, “It was the highlight of my day. I really enjoyed it, and I loved the acting. I'm very excited to see more productions in the future.”

Leo Zhu (IV) said, “All the characters had their own unique personalities and it really helped develop the hilarious jokes! My favorite scene was the scene about couple's therapy. I laughed



Peter Chollick

played important roles as well: Lily Cao served as one of the stage managers while Katherine Trejo led other students as the lead techie.

With all the different characters, Mr. Romano stressed that it was completely necessary to stay in the moment and be present. He said, “All the training that led up to opening night was designed to have the actors and actresses be in the moment. You had to be connected to your scene partner through second circle energy.”

Another way *Scenes from American Life* was different from last year's *Midsummer/ Jersey* was the inclusion of fac-

“My favorite part was production week because we spent the most time with the cast and crew, so it is when we really bonded. The rest of the cast provided support and got me through it!”

Despite the hard work put into the rehearsals leading up to opening night, the cast members agreed that the play was a great experience. Kat Deliarigryis (IV) said, “The relationships you make are lifelong. Everyone is so nice, and even though it is super stressful at times, in the end, we put on an awesome show.”

The audience members agreed, offering enthusiastic praise and standing ovations.

so hard!”

For both audience and cast members alike, *Scenes from American Life* was a memorable production, especially for the senior members of the drama program.

“I'm glad that I had the opportunity to do a different show than what we had been doing the past two years,” Maddy Shiels (VI) said. “My favorite scene was my monologue where I'm saying goodbye to my family, and I loved doing that scene because it was my way of saying goodbye to the Pingry drama department and to the whole community.”

Buttondowns Perform in Hauser

By LINDSEY LUBOWITZ (VI)

On the morning of November 22, during the week before students departed for Thanksgiving break, the Pingry community piled into Hauser Auditorium to watch the highly anticipated Buttondowns assembly. Buttondown president James Robertson (VI) led the Buttondowns, Pingry's all-male a capella group, through an extremely successful performance.

The assembly started with the Buttondowns' annual movie, a self-made flick that often makes the whole school laugh. One of the first scenes of the video was a shot of the administration using the Pingry Fund to play a game of poker. Members of the Buttondowns then took it upon themselves to get the money back. The movie followed the members of the Buttondowns around the school as they gained and lost money for the Pingry fund, participated in rap battles, played Pokémon, and interacted with various staff members.

At the end of the video, they ran around the school while sporting their classic attire of khakis, white socks, and a white buttondown shirt before finally entering the assembly.

The boys ran into the assembly to the rhythm of “We Will Rock

You” and, once they reached the stage, immediately began their Shrek medley with soloists Matthew Peacock (VI), Ian Dugan (IV) and Connor Beard (VI). The medley consisted of “Accidentally In Love” by Counting Crows, “All Star” by Smash Mouth, and “Changes” by David Bowie.

After the first song, James Robertson introduced the group before leading into their next

and his immense contribution throughout his four years. He then soloed in “You Make My Dreams Come True” by Hall & Oates.

Looking back on his four years as a Buttondown, Henry Kraham (VI) felt sentimental after his last assembly. He claimed the 2016 assembly was the “best one I've ever been a part of” and that “it's unfortunate that it was



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song, “Mirrors” by Justin Timberlake, with soloists Jared Tiggs (V) and Gabe Gever (VI). Their third song, with soloist Jonathan Huang (V), was “I Thought She Knew” by NSYNC.

Before they began their final song, the Buttondowns thanked James Robertson for his inestimable dedication to the group

the last one, but it was a great one to leave on.”

Throughout the assembly, the soloists of the Buttondowns charmed the people who chose an aisle seat by serenading them and showing off their dance moves. The assembly left everyone in a good mood to finish off their final classes before the five-day break.

Taylor Promotes LGBT Acceptance

By DARLENE FUNG (IV)

On October 21st, Hudson Taylor visited Pingry to talk about Athlete Ally, a foundation focused on promoting the acceptance of LGBT members into the athletic community by educating people to speak up against LGBT discrimination. He founded the organization in an effort to put an end to homophobia and transphobia in sports communities.

According to Mr. Taylor, he created this initiative because of some of his experiences in college as an athlete and actor.

A former wrestler, he achieved many accomplishments during his collegiate wrestling career: he has a career total of a record-breaking 140 wins, is a four-time qualifier for the NAAs, holds the record of most pins and wins in the history of wrestling at the University of Maryland as well as multiple hall-of-fame records. Finally, he is among the top five pinners in NCAA wrestling history, just to name a few.

At the same time, Mr. Taylor was also involved in theater at college. He befriended many LGBT members in his theater classes and through his interactions with them, came to understand the impact of homophobic and transphobic language on the LGBT community.

He recalled a particular moment in which one of the students in a theater class announced to the class that he was gay. One by one, Mr. Taylor and his classmates

began clapping and hugging this student, embracing him and commending him for his courage to come out.

In contrast to the warm community of his theater class, the wrestling community that Mr.



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Taylor was also a part of was much less welcoming to LGBT members. On his collegiate wrestling team, homophobic slurs and derogatory humor would be casually thrown around by Mr. Taylor's teammates and even by some coaches. As a result of his involvement in both wrestling and theater, Mr. Taylor was able to see first hand the negative effects of the demeaning language used by his wrestling team on LGBT members. This experience drove Mr. Taylor to work towards changing athletes' attitudes towards LGBT

members.

Before changing the attitudes of others, however, Mr. Taylor had to overcome his own challenges. Mr. Taylor's great-great-grandfather, James Hudson Taylor, was a Christian missionary. Coming from a devout Christian family, Mr. Taylor had to reconcile his beliefs on LGBT rights with the beliefs of his religion. Mr. Taylor also had to build up the confidence to address his concerns to a group of wrestlers accustomed to using derogatory language haphazardly, the majority of whom had not been personally affected by it as Mr. Taylor had been.

During his senior year of college, Mr. Taylor wore an equality sticker on his wrestling headgear, and while he initially received criticism from his peers, Mr. Taylor ended up receiving thousands of thankful emails from LGBT members, as well as people who had been affected by homophobic and transphobic language. All the positive feedback prompted Mr. Taylor to create Athlete Ally and encouraged him to continue to spread his goal for LGBT acceptance in sports across the nation.

According to Mr. Steve Benoit, co-coordinator and member of the Multicultural Team, the Hudson Taylor assembly addressed an issue relevant to the Pingry community itself.

“I had heard from some students that the reason why they

R-E-S-P-E-C-T!

By KATIE HO (VI)

In the past two months, I have marched from Washington Square Park to Trump Tower for an Anti-Trump protest, and I have also just recently flown back from Atlanta for the annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference. Although the two events were quite different (one required a lot of walking, standing, and shouting, and the other required quite a bit of sitting, reflecting, and listening), as a result of the election, and as a result of the march and conference, I learned some key lessons: I saw the hate and fear in our country, and at the same time, I learned the importance of sticking to my values in order to stand up for my beliefs.

The hate and fear I saw in our country spilled over into our school. In the week after the election, Mr. Conard wrote to Upper School parents, "Never before in my memory have the rhetoric and campaign promises of a presidential election so clearly and consistently targeted people because of who they are, because of their identities. This year is different because the outcome of the election is causing genuine anxiety and even fear for some members of our community. Some of the divisive and hate-filled rhetoric of the campaign has appeared in our halls. It is not rampant, by any means, but it does not need to be in order to cause harm."

As Mr. Conard acknowledged, as a result of the election, members of our community have felt anxiety and fear, which should be unacceptable to all of us. When thinking about the Honor Code, the first line that comes to mind is, "The members of the Pingry community should honor the rights of others, conducting themselves at all times in a moral and decent manner while at Pingry and throughout their lives as citizens of and contributors to the larger community of the world."

Mr. Conard's morning meeting speech to the Upper School students and faculty, along with his letter to our parents, confirmed what many of us felt. It was important because he reminded us all of our school and community's values, the Honor Code, and what we stand for. Our school stands for "diversity and inclusion" and "honor and character."

At the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, I participated in a plethora of activities where there was no talking whatsoever. The facilitator of my group mentioned that these "silent" activities were important because they allowed us to take the time to listen and process respectfully. When a peer spoke from the "I" perspective, I was almost able to place myself in that person's shoes and understand how that person's story, background, and struggles were entirely different from mine.

Coming back to Pingry after my time away, I know it's more important than ever that we remember who we are as a school, community, and the individual people who come together here every day. Although some of us remain saddened, surprised and disappointed by the results of the election, we need to remember that some members of our school don't believe that the President-elect will be as divisive as his campaign rhetoric and behavior. I hope they are right.

What's essential for us is that we all treat one another with respect.

If we all take the time to listen to our fellow students, we will hopefully become better at listening to all Americans' struggles. That approach will allow us to have an honest dialogue with each other, work together as people of different races, genders, and national origins, and continue to get involved and stand up for what we believe in. Just as we fight racism, bigotry, sexism, and xenophobia in our school, we can model what needs to happen in our country.

-Katie Ho

By JOSH METZGER (VI)

Intense party polarization has established a chasm between the two ends of the ideological spectrum, as Republicans seem to be in perpetual battle with Democrats. In no instance was this party divide more in evidence than in the 2016 presidential election.

As Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump squared-off in what seemed to be the most vicious and bombastic election cycle in history, it was clear that the two candidates developed very different -- and disreputable -- personalities.

On the one hand, to many Americans, Donald Trump appeared to be a racist, misogynistic, and xenophobic plutocrat with an unfettered license to defame. On the other hand, Hillary Clinton was seen to personify what many felt was wrong with Washington's corrupt power structure -- commonly known as the "machine" -- characterized by greed, bribery, and a lack of principle.

Nobody saw it coming. In the weeks and even months before November 8th, Donald Trump's path to the White House seemed nearly nonexistent. So how did he win?

Many hypotheses point toward Trump's ability to tap into the frustrations of ostensibly disenfranchised and out-of-work denizens of the Rust Belt. These people felt that Washington had stopped working for them, as their futures looked jobless and bleak.

Trump, honing in on a message of the perennial greed and self-interest of beltway politicians whose pockets are continually lined by special interests, set himself up as a messianic outsider. He further exploited the distrust and ill-will Republi-

cans had felt toward not only the Washington elite, but also toward party leadership, who they felt no longer held values comparable to theirs. These citizens felt like this was their chance to shake things up and terminate the Washington machine.

Thus, Trump's unique ideology and platform (such as establishing a protectionist agenda, fighting immigration, eradicating ISIS, lowering taxes on the middle class, and investing in infrastructure and energy, particularly coal) resonated with a large swath of people who felt that their concerns had been given a deaf ear.

Moreover, many people point to a "white lash." This may have been a factor, and many supplement this belief by stating that Trump supporters, and the Silent Majority in particular, came out in large numbers as an opposition to what they felt was a dominating liberal culture -- as well as an opposition to the Obama agenda.

Ultimately, Trump's promise to "Make America Great Again" made these people feel like their lives had purpose; his caricature of himself as a winner



Nancy Lu (VI)

made them feel that their association with him would make them winners as well. They acknowledged his brash and braggadocios personality (and likely saw some elements of racism, xenophobia, and sexism in his rhetoric) but his promise for change -- whatever it may be -- made him appealing to the "forgotten Americans" who ultimately cast their votes to make him become the president-elect.

Action needs to be put forth to heal the wounds of a long and hard-fought election season. First, challenging the legitimacy of the Trump presidency will only exacerbate issues. Donald Trump will be our next president. Entertaining fantasies that electors will declare themselves faithless or that a recount will take place in states such as Wisconsin or Michigan only blinds one to this reality.

Declaring that he is not one's president further stands as a refusal to make one cognizant of this fact. Of course, the phrase is

meant to be a repudiation of his character and stances, but such rhetoric will only cause greater divisiveness.

Also, Mr. Trump needs to be given a chance in office. Although his language during the campaign was highly inflammatory and understandably frightening to some, affording the president-elect the chance to govern for -- what should be -- the public good is critical.

To move forward as a school, Trump supporters should not gloat. And Clinton supporters should not grieve. We are a community.

We all hope that America should persevere through such a divisive election cycle, and so together we should serve as a microcosm of this endeavor. Through understanding and acceptance of each other as ethically sound individuals, political squabbling can subside and we can all look forward to a more harmonious future ahead.

We Must Acknowledge Our Privilege

By MEGAN PAN (V)

We, as members of the Pingry community, are living inside a bubble. Though we are diverse in terms of our backgrounds and perspectives, we are all united under the Pingry School, which provides us with opportunities and benefits to which not every American has easy access.

Additionally, most Pingry families are, relatively speaking, financially well-off. After all, tuition for one year in the Pingry Upper School (\$38,273 for the 2016-2017 academic year) would make up a whopping 70.3% of the median household income of an American in 2015 (\$54,462 according to the Census Bureau).

In the aftermath of the 2016 United States presidential election, it is important that we acknowledge our privilege as members of the Pingry community, as well as our individual privileges, in our interactions with not only each other but also with members of the greater national community.

Undoubtedly, the main figures of the 2016 election were Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and Republican nominee Donald Trump. Throughout the campaign season, both candidates garnered avid support and equally extreme opposition from Americans.

However, what struck me as particularly interesting was the intensity with which supporters of both sides vilified those of the other.

It was not enough simply to dismiss "Crooked Hillary" as a liar; many anti-Clinton Americans lashed out at her supporters, "the liberals", as well. Similarly, many anti-Trump Americans were not

quality.

These voters likely saw promise in Trump's departure from the Obama administration and Trump's vision to create 25 million new jobs over the next decade and voted accordingly.

For the roughly 41% of people polled who earn less than \$30,000 yearly and supported Trump, economic issues likely took priority over others in this election.

For many members of the Pingry community who valued social issues above all else, it may have been easy to immediately denounce all Trump voters as inherently bigoted without acknowledging their own socioeconomic privilege over others.

Alternatively, Clinton's supporters were largely among minority groups, such as people of color, members of the LGBT+ community, non-Christians, etc.

Following the ascension of Trump to the role of President-elect, it is an undeniable fact that there has been an increase of reported incidents of negative sentiment in the country against minorities.

The day after the election, a swastika and the words "Siege

Heil 2016" ("Hail Victory," a common Nazi chant) were sprayed on a store window in Philadelphia, and reporters have noted the rise of the "alt-right" in America. Middle school students in a Michigan school raised a chant of "build the wall" in the cafeteria during lunch hour. Even within the Pingry community, the phrase "Make America White Again" was written on a cubicle in the library.

Living in socially tolerant New Jersey and being part of the diverse Pingry community, we might not have been as acutely aware of the status of minority groups in other areas of the country.

For all of us at Pingry, our bubbles might have prevented us from being able to accept and understand the political opinions of those we disagree with, albeit in different ways. Going forward, we must be able to assimilate the points of view of others in political discourse.

It is not enough simply to be civil without the intent to understand. The divisiveness of the election will tear our country apart unless we learn to see each other not as concepts and statistics, but also as individual people -- as Americans.

The Pingry Record

NUMBER 2

VOLUME CXLII

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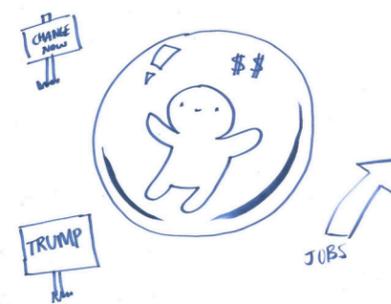
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Liberals: Don't Blame, Learn

By DAVID FROMM (IV)

Regardless of who you supported this election, the result was shocking. I was blown away. Full disclosure, not a single person in my family supported Trump. But Donald J. Trump is the President-Elect. And he will be my President.

I say this not to mock those who protested the results of the election, but as a reminder of fact. Several themes have developed since the election, but I want to focus on the one that I am most familiar with: the liberal response to Trump's victory.

There has been a troubling lack of self-reflection in the liberal political arena since the election. Instead of focusing on the reason for the Democratic loss, there's been an ostracization of those who voted differently.

I've heard blanket generalizations and expressions of disdain for Trump voters. I've recoiled at seemingly race-baiting words from Trump and his supporters, but it's crucial to understand that a significant number of Trump supporters voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012.

The majority voted for Trump out of economic frustration, not out of hatred for minorities. Casting an entire group of people as racist or bigoted may make someone feel better, but it is counterproductive to the goal of winning the next election. In order for liberals to eventually prevail, we have to understand how we lost.

A few mistakes are apparent:

First: Arrogance.

Hillary Clinton never stepped foot in Wisconsin during her campaign, and only visited Michigan once -- two states that were critical to her path to victory. She lost both. Her campaign dismissed speculation that a lack of enthusiasm coupled with uncharacteristically high support for Trump from the white

ing of the election.

From the start, Clinton attempted to cast herself as an outsider. During the primary, she claimed that being a woman made her one. Politics is a male dominated field, but the argument was silly. How can you be an outsider when you've been holding political office and affecting policy for 30 years? This decision was emblematic of a larger issue. Clinton responded to the

voters don't care about what he said ten years ago, they care about his promise to bring the coal mines back and to "start winning again." They like that brashness, they like that he's "real."

Clinton should have instead focused on his inconsistent policy. He has done 180 degree turns on several relevant issues. His stance on immigration, gun control, abortion, and the Iraq war have all radically changed. Showcasing Trump's inconsistency and weakness on policy would have been a more effective line of attack than simply characterizing him as a "jerk."

Third: Clinton failed to stand for something.

Front and center on her website was the line "We Can't Afford a Trump Presidency." She was Anti-Trump, but she failed to characterize herself as something beyond that. Trump supporters felt a strong emotional connection to him; Clinton supporters, by and large, did not.

Trump supporters could point to signature and candidate defining proposals: building "The Wall," ripping apart trade deals, and banning Muslims.

What did Clinton stand for? I'm not sure, and neither did many voters. 90 million people who were eligible to vote didn't bother.

So liberals, learn your lesson. Think about where we messed up this election and try to understand opposite voters' perspectives.

In order to win the next time, we have to.



Nancy Lu (VI)

working class would change the normal voting behavior of these traditionally blue states. Instead, the Clinton campaign doubled down on investments in "swing" states, spending resources in places that were not critical, but helpful, like North Carolina, Georgia, and Utah. It tried to expand the map, not solidify her lead, and the plan failed. She lost all three states.

Second: Clinton's misfram-

atmosphere; she didn't set it. She should have characterized herself as a tested candidate with vast experience, a more defensible and accurate argument.

Clinton also attacked the wrong parts of Trump. Her ads in working class states played on brash remarks Trump has made. But brashness is not a losing quality for Trump. It is frequently his selling point. His

Say No to "Locker Room Talk"

By RACHEL CHEN (V)

Hours before Thanksgiving, my family was happily speeding towards JFK when an older cousin said an atrocious thing. I will not repeat it here. Suffice it to say that it was not kind toward certain "minority" groups, and that I could only stand five minutes of civil discourse before my eyes welled up and I needed to stop.

My cousin refused to apologize. "Why do you get so emotional about these things, Rachel?" It might have been fine if she just stopped there, but she continued, "Donald Trump has the right idea about political correctness. I can't even say what I really think in my own car, to my own family."

Early in the election, someone once explained to me why Trump's coarse language was so appealing: "He says exactly what people think, but they're too afraid to say." Throughout the phenomenon of Trump's rise, his (lack of) word choice has elicited two reactions: admiration for his fearlessness, or fear that his words will become actions.

The admiring generally try to reassure the fearful that words are only words; that a few hurtful truths will have no impact on daily life; that "locker room talk" and "real talk" are acceptable excuses for cruelty and hate speech.

But the problem is that it simply isn't true. Alone, words are only hurtful and terrifying. Translated into actions, they

threaten the security, happiness, and livelihoods of their victims. And that is what Trump's words have become.

Across the nation, hate crimes and bias-related attacks have risen dramatically since the election. I could recount here any number of Muslims attacked, walls graffitied, and minorities harassed, but my 650 word limit is not enough for me to describe the enor-

exposure of America's ugly, racist underbelly. Not only did a presidential candidate speak aloud people's secret, most unforgivable thoughts, but he also won the entire election.

As a result, people feel validated in their hatred. They feel brave enough to act on the prejudices they always felt but could never show.

While we may not have overt attacks or blatant ha-

Translated into actions, [words can] threaten the security, happiness, and livelihoods of their victims.

mity of the crimes I researched while preparing this piece. Instead, I present real headlines from USA Today, The New York Times, CNN and NBC:

□ Post-election spate of hate crimes worse than post-9/11, experts say

□ Reports of Bias-Based Attacks Tick Upward After Election

□ Hate crimes, racist graffiti after election; Trump says 'stop it'

□ Hundreds of Hate Crimes Reported Since Election

There is a direct causation between the election of Donald Trump and the sudden

rassment at Pingry, we are not untouchable to America's changing culture either. So what can we do when faced with neo-Nazi phrases etched in the library cubicle or the problematic remarks of a family member?

First, pick your battles. There is a time and place—and method!—to have productive conversations. Maybe on the car to the airport for a family vacation was not the best time for mine.

Second, stay in control. Of course, be brave, be loud, and stand tall when you have discussions—but don't be so carried away by emotion or

self-righteousness that you can't listen to those you disagree with and respond with respect and dignity.

And finally, be kind to one another. No matter what you believe, support your friends and respect your opponents. Do not buy into the idea that it's okay to hurt others because you're just saying and doing what you feel. It's not.

Cruelty and abuse in the name of honesty is not what we stand for as Pingry students, or as Americans.

The truth is that the words of President Elect Donald Trump that so offended and divided our country may never become real, substantial pieces of legislation.

The Constitution established checks and balances to prevent the concentration of power within a single person;

for better or for worse, Donald Trump will not be the exception to 240 years of democratic tradition.

No, the real threat is the power of the people. Because when a mass movement of everyday Americans feels so validated in their hatred that they take action on it, that is when hate will truly win.

Taylor Promotes LGBT Acceptance (continued from page 1)

were not out at Pingry was because of athletics," Mr. Benoit said. "It was clear that there was work to be done, specifically around athletics, before Pingry could really feel like a safe space to come out."

However, the assembly, along with the accompanying advisory discussions, has led to greater talk about inclusion within the Pingry community.

"From what I've observed, it's made a positive impact," Mr. Benoit said. "I've spoken to some athletes who identify as straight and who are very much on board with this idea. Hudson Taylor was the perfect messenger to deliver this message — he is a straight athlete who is passionate

...the assembly, along with the accompanying advisory discussions, has led to greater talk about inclusion within the Pingry community.

about issues surrounding equality, safety, and inclusiveness. I've heard positive feedback from students who are LGBTQ athletes,

and they've noticed a change in atmosphere."

Student response supports his point of view. Reflecting on the assembly, Grace Brown (IV) said, "Everyone deserves to have the same inclusive, equal, and respectful experience that I think makes Pingry sports teams so great, and an important part of this is making sure that we speak out against homophobic and transphobic language. Hudson Taylor's message was an especially powerful one in our community in terms of our honor code."

Going forward, in order to promote greater LGBT acceptance, Pingry needs to "be mindful of heteronormativity."

"Don't always make assumptions that everyone is straight or cisgender," Mr. Benoit said. "We all realize that language and cultural habits are hard to change, but any sort of progress away from the direction of heteronormativity is important."

Brown agreed. "I think it will be important to make sure that the conversation doesn't stop when we leave Hauser," she said, "but that it continues onward as we work to foster an environment of respect and inclusion in our community."

Take a Stand!

By MARIAM TRICHAS (V)

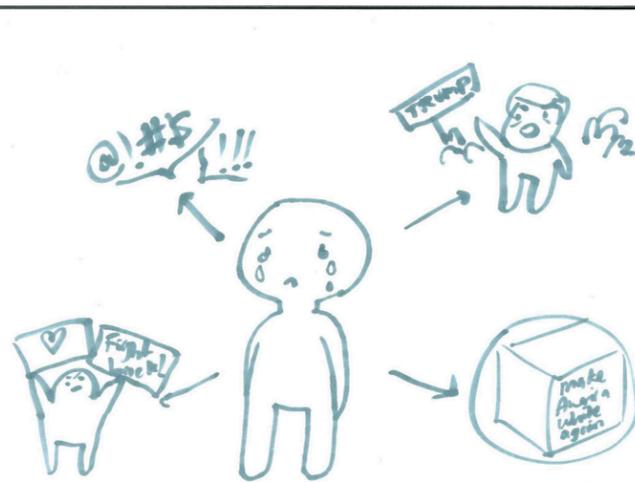
Throughout this past election, I found myself constantly engrossed in what was transpiring. I was reading news articles about the latest developments in my free time, and I was watching the news more frequently. I definitely would not have been so absorbed in the developments of this election if it had been any other one, but so much was at stake that I was constantly seeking validation to alleviate my fears that my worst nightmare would come true.

I, like many others, was stunned and saddened after the election. I tried to find a way to channel my angst into something positive and meaningful in the aftermath of the post election results. Believe me—it took me a while to search for something positive that I could take away from this election, but after a couple days, I finally found it. I realized that throughout the past few months, I had been so engrossed in this election because many of the values and rights that I care about were on the line. The hateful, divisive, and often juvenile rhetoric of Donald Trump's campaign sparked a feeling of fear in me that if he won, he could effectively reverse the progress that has been made with regard to both women's rights and civil rights in this country.

I discovered that I could channel my feelings into activism of any kind—yes, that could mean getting involved in local government or politics—but it could also mean advocating for people who are oppressed rather than ignoring their plight, which would be equivalent to being an oppressor. More than anything, this election has taught me that silence in the presence of oppression means that you are complicit in the crime, and that if you want to see change, you need to actively pursue it.

It is human nature to become complacent after a while. This election has proved more than anything that we need to be engaged in the world around us instead of taking a back seat and letting others do the work. We need to use this election as inspiration to get more involved in the causes and issues we care about, as well as to stay more aware of current events and the world around us. This could mean just being more involved in something meaningful to you, whether that might be working harder on a project, getting involved in community service, or simply being more present in every day interactions with your family.

Never again will I take things for granted. That's a lesson worth learning.



Nancy Lu (VI)

Holiday

By ETHAN MALZBERG (IV)
and VICKY CHEN (IV)

In a less literal sense, the holiday season signifies much more at Pingry than the actual celebration of the holidays themselves and instead carries a universal meaning to all of the students and faculty in the Pingry community. When students and teachers imagine the holidays, some imagine the immense stress of the weeks prior to winter break and essays all packed into a short period of time. In a much lighter tone, students also anticipate the “secret snowflake” gift swaps for that reason, there is no singular idea of what the “holiday spirit” means here at Pingry. For some students, the holidays might mean that it’s time to celebrate Christmas or Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, and for others, it might mean excitement about bringing in the New Year with a fresh start. All of these ideas, which are about “holidays” in the literal sense, are seen almost everywhere in Pingry — whether it be reflections in art or English class about the previous 365 days and hopes for the next year, the anticipated return of Latkes during school lunches, or the Kwanzaa and Christmas decorations that line the hallways and deck the library’s shelves.

candle” tradition by the Student Body President and a lucky kindergarten. Upper School students are also always excited for the annual SAC assembly on the last day before break, and they are happy to share a laugh with their classmates after a long month of school and say goodbye to their friends before winter break.

It is easy to get caught up in the frenzy of festivities and stress surrounding the holiday season. Set a reminder to take a step back and appreciate all the happiness and good memories which the year has brought and focus on giving back to others that are less fortunate. The Pingry community unites to help out and spread joy to those who need it more, especially through the various drives, letters to veterans, and bake sales that are held during the holiday season.

Mrs. Shelley Hartz, Pingry’s Director of Community Service, describes the generous holiday spirit best: “I am always touched by Pingry’s capacity to give not only to each other in our own community but to the larger community as well. While we are in the midst of a season of thanks and giving, I am happy to say that Pingry gives continually throughout the year through bake sales, dress down days, walks, and all other creative ideas that our students come up with for ways to give back.”

GSA Forum Joins a Community Together

By MIRO BERGAM (IV)

On November 19th, Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA) from high schools across New Jersey joined together at Perth Amboy High School for the thirteenth annual New Jersey GSA Forum.

Along with the Diversity and Inclusion Department chair Dr. Diana Artis, assistant chair Mrs. Eva Ostrowsky, and GSA-Spectrum advisors Mr. Steve Benoit and Ms. Kathryn Smith, student leaders of the school’s GSA attended the forum to learn how to make Pingry a safer and more inclusive space, as well as to educate themselves on issues and topics topical to the LGBTQ+ community and their allies.

At 9 am, the day kicked off. Attendees mingled, listened to the opening remarks, and participated in an icebreaker in which everyone exchanged their pronouns and their expectations for the forum. After that, the first two sessions of seminars began. The seminars ranged from the hands-on “Let’s write a Queer Friendly Song!”, in which students collaborated

to write an LGBTQ+ oriented song in defiance of current heteronormative media, to the empowering “Radical Narratives: Change Your Body’s Story” that confronted the complex relationship between gender-nonconforming people and their bodies, to the informative “Break the Silence: HIV/AIDS Prevention,” which looked to educate on HIV prevention, treatment, and awareness.

At lunch, everyone reconvened to listen to the keynote speaker, the openly “queer migrant feminist” poet Sonia Guinansaca, present her inspiring and empowering poetry on identity. She spoke about



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the effects that the 2016 Presidential Election may have on the LGBTQ+ community and other communities represented in the room. Her presentation was followed by a final round of seminars and some closing remarks.

“By going to the GSA forum, we’ve learned how to be a better GSA,” Giancarlo Castillo (V), Pingry’s current GSA president, reflected. “One that can be a safer and more inclusive space for people of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as for allies who want to support our community through friendship.”

With well over 500 people from all over the gender and sexuality spectrum present, this year’s NJ GSA Forum pulled together an impressively diverse range of voices and minds. “It was really interesting to be in a space where the LGBTQ+ people outnumbered the allies by so much,” Stuart Clark (III) said.

“It was my first time going to the Forum,” Ms. Kathryn Smith said. “I found it so exciting to see so many kids, a giant force of over 500 kids, who were all interested in solving such a real issue. It was great to see our kids from Pingry, as well as all the kids present, find such a lively and active community to belong in.”

Unifying Tunes in Divisive Times

By ALLIE VERDESCA (V)

These past few months arguably have been some of the most divisive times in American history. We are quick to call attention to the differences between us, whether they are in physical appearance, religious beliefs, lifestyle choices, or political opinions. However, we neglect to recognize the many unifying factors among us, the most universal being music. To quote Billy Joel, music is “something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we’re from, everybody loves music.”

So with this in mind, I encourage you to embrace music with open arms, listen to bands and artists that you normally would ignore. If we open our hearts and ears to different sounds, we are exposed to many different opinions and cultures. On that note, here are some of my picks that represent a bending of genres and a new sound.

Of course, pop remains the driving force behind mainstream music, enthralling listeners with its thumping bass and catchy lyrics that make you want to drop everything and dance. And although I tend to branch out from the usual pop music, like Ariana Grande and Taylor Swift, there are some earworms that even I can’t get out of my head. One new album I can’t stop listening to is Joanne,

Lady Gaga’s fifth studio work. Joanne is completely different from anything Lady Gaga has released before. Gaga has had quite the reputation for rebellious, weird, and captivating tunes. Joanne has a much more stripped-down and laid-back sound, marking a transformation not only in Gaga’s voice, but also in her own personal maturity. The songs are much less glitzy than those of many other pop artists, but her exemplary vocals and personalized lyrics sound fresh and exciting.

There are also many pop musicians this season that are combining genres to reinvent themselves. For example, no one could have predicted the remarkable change in music produced by The Chainsmokers. Their new single “Closer” has been at the top of the charts for a consecutive 12 weeks, a formidable personal record. However, credit for the popularity of “Closer” is also due to Halsey, the alternative female singer who paired with the duo to make the song a smashing success. Halsey’s debut album *Badlands* was released last year, and her music has been featured in all sorts of media. Most notably her song “Castle” was used in the trailer for the movie *Huntsman: Winter’s War*. Halsey’s music gives pop music a more indie/alternative feel; she defines her genre as “electropop.” Her songs

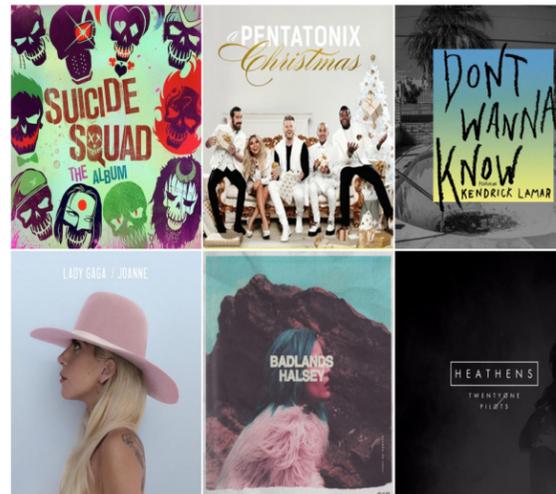
utilize lots of synth chords and intense lyrics that give a glimpse into the singer’s unapologetic personality.

A similar blend of alternative and pop music is being crafted by the rap duo Twenty One Pilots, whose rise to popularity is an unexpected but welcome phenomena. Their song, “Heathens,” became popular when it was featured as the lead single on the soundtrack for the recently released *Suicide Squad*. This release followed the success of their album *Blurryface*, which contained well-received songs such as “Ride” and “Stressed Out.” Twenty One Pilots is certainly the underdog of pop music, creating a genre of their own. Somehow, they manage to combine pop with rap, electronic synth, and the ukulele. Their masterful blending and breaking of typical musical stereotypes makes Twenty One Pilots a formidable and fresh new sound on the radio.

Other recent releases

include the much-anticipated Pentatonix Christmas album. This well known a capella group made waves with their cover of “Hallelujah” by Leonard Cohen, which is featured on the album. Also, Maroon Five released “I Don’t Wanna Know,” another catchy song from the pop band headlined by Adam Levine. So no matter what kind of music you listen to, there are lots of great new options to satisfy your personal taste.

Get out there and listen!



Movies to Watch Over Winter Break

By ALEXIS ELLIOT (V)

With the approaching Winter Break come the final tests, essays, and assessments of 2016. Winter Break gives us a chance to for-

Break: holiday classics are the perfect way to de-stress while also feeling hopeful and excited for the holidays.



get school stress, spend time with family, and enjoy things we normally couldn’t during our school schedule. Catching up on old movies is the perfect hobby to partake in during Winter

Elf is an excellent starting point. Will Ferrell, who plays Buddy the Elf, is accidentally transported to the North Pole from a New York City orphanage as a toddler. Although Buddy believes he is an elf, in reality, he is a fully grown man, which prevents him from completing elf tasks. Buddy searches for his real family before Christmas. His real father happens to be Walter Hobbs, a businessman at a children’s publishing company. Viewers are taken along for the journey as Buddy tries to form a relationship with his real family. Elf is full of laughs and its sentimental scenes are definitely a light-hearted way to get into the holiday spirit.

After having some laughs with Elf, a great transition would be the unconventional Christmas cartoon: *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. In this claymation film, Jack Skellington, the king of Halloween Town,

becomes bored by taking part in the same Halloween rituals every single year. Escaping these traditions, he wanders into the forest and comes across several trees, each one holding the door to a different holiday. Upon entering the Christmas door, Jack realizes that this holiday is the exact opposite of Halloween. Writer Tim Burton takes viewers on a magical journey in this classic with his excellent usage of claymation and his wide variety of characters. His signature twist on a holiday film is the perfect way to continue a holiday blockbuster marathon.

Another must-watch is *Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer*. This stop-motion film is the quintessential holiday movie. Everyone knows Rudolph’s tale, thanks to the world famous children’s song, but seeing the action unfold on screen is a completely different experience. The claymation gives it a more pleasant watch, and viewers will definitely be left overflowing with holiday joy.

If you are not in the mood for holiday movies over break, it is never a bad idea to catch up

on old shows. At the end of November, Netflix released the revival for the hit show, *Gilmore Girls*. The show revolves around Lorelai Gilmore and her daughter, Rory. Lorelai had Rory at a young age, and the series highlights the best-friend nature of this close mother-daughter bond. The revival of the series is set ten years in the future. Viewers are given the chance to see how Lorelai and Rory’s lives have changed over the years. Winter Break is the perfect time to binge watch the previous seasons and enjoy the revival.

However, don’t be fooled by Netflix’s addition of *Gilmore Girls*. Unfortunately, Netflix is planning to get rid of dozens of hit movies and television shows before the end of this year. *Legally Blonde*, *The Boondocks*, and *Spy Kids* are amongst the TV shows and movies that are leaving Netflix. If you are in the mood to feel nostalgic, watch these movies before they are gone.

With a wide variety of holiday and “throw-back” shows and movies to choose from, Winter Break should be nothing short of exciting.

Have a Happy Holiday! Stay tuned for more school news, sports, and commentary in our next issue in 2017!