

# Loomis Chaffee Log

APRIL 13, 2018

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“NICE MEME”

## STUDENT PANEL SHARES PERSPECTIVES ON RACIAL IDENTITY

Minna Gao '19 | News Editor



A panel of LC students and faculty discusses black identity in America Photo by Margaret Kanyoko '20

On Monday, April 2, a panel of African and African American students and faculty discussed the complexities of black identity and being black in America. A brainchild of Margaret Kanyoko '20 and organized with the help of Mrs. Parada, Mr. Pond, and Mr. LaForest, the panel took place in Hubbard Auditorium and had a sizable audience comprised of both students and faculty. The panel speakers came from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and consisted of Kaitlin Donovan '19, Amaiya Parker '18, Thierno Diallo '21, Lily Tapsoba '20, Simone Moales '21, Marahyah Richardson (Richie) '19, Oumi Sowe '20, Dean Patricia Sasser, and Mr. Elliott Dial.

“I wanted to bring light to the diversity within the black race, and within the people who are black,” Margaret said, explaining her purpose in starting the panel. She expressed how people often neglect other qualities and identities of black people, and affirmed her desire for the society to look past the skin color.

After the panel members introduced themselves and gave the audience some insight into their origins, Margaret started the dialogue by asking the speakers if the term “black” affected the way they see themselves and their experiences of being black.

Thierno, a freshman from Guinea, responded that the stereotypes and connotations associated with the term “black” didn't affect his self-identity, but pressured him into doing things that are stereotypically “black.” “I started playing basketball because people told me that's what black people do,” said Thierno. In a later interview, Thierno recalled how he was taken aback when he first experienced racism in America and reflected that “it takes some getting-used-to to be black in a place where blacks are the minority.”

Other panel speakers also commented on black stereotypes and their repressing nature. Acutely aware of the assumptions that people associate with skin color, Richie explained how she defies one of the commonest black stereotype, the black athlete, in that she is heavily involved in theater but is not athletic. “I don't fit into any of these stereotypes; the only thing ‘black’ about me is my skin,” concluded Richie.

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## LCGVH COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL 2017-18 SEASON

Lauren Hinton '18 | Managing Editor



LCGVH celebrates win Photo by Erin Levine '18

Out of all winter teams, the girls hockey team had one of the strongest records, with eighteen wins, five losses, and two ties, following last year with another exceptional set of performances. The team was young in comparison to last year, featuring only three seniors and adding five freshman; however, they felt prepared for the challenges of the season. Senior goalkeeper Taylor Stadel explains that the team “thrived on being an underdog.”

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## PELICANS BACKPACK THROUGH UTAH

Arjun Ahilan '20 | Contributor

Cold nights, high altitude air, 85-pound packs, leaking rafts, and food rationing made us wonder out loud, “are we having fun yet?” Surprisingly, the answer was a resounding “yes.” On March 3, twelve Loomis Chaffee students along with Mr. Reed, an English teacher, and Ms. Steinfeld, an HPRESS Faculty member, departed from Durango, Colorado for an eight-day hiking trip in White Canyon and short raft in the San Juan River. As soon as we relinquished our cell phones and donned our 85 pound backpacks, we knew that we were out of our comfort zone—physically as well as psychologically—and that a number of challenges awaited us.

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# SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE LC ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Stephanie Zhang '21 | Staff Writer

The admissions process remains a mystery throughout the high school application period and returns to plague students during their senior year. From interviews to the SSAT, every piece of the application is crucial to a successful admittance.

As Ms. Petrillo, dean of enrollment, put it, “Each piece of the application file is a piece of the puzzle — any one piece alone can’t give us the full picture.”

For both applicants and admission officers, admission to Loomis Chaffee is a multi-step process.

“The first step requires prospective students to reach out and fill in inquiry forms. Loomis’ Admission Associates travel the U.S. and other countries, meeting students and families interested in boarding schools and introducing them to our school. Each Admission Associate manages a geographic territory, which means they work with prospective families from their territories throughout the admission process, travel to recruitment fairs in those territories, and get to know middle schools and secondary school placement counselors in those areas,” explained Ms. Petrillo.

Once a student has made an inquiry, Loomis begins sending him/her information about the school in the form of letters, emails, newsletters, videos, and social media. From there on, the applicant is required to complete an interview with an Admission Associate and submit other application materials. Then, from January through March 10, the Admission Associates read the files and meet in committees to make decisions.

Multiple factors influence the decisions of the Admissions Office.

Mrs. Cleary, director of admission and financial aid, stated, “Applying for financial aid can definitely impact an application. It doesn’t necessarily, but every year we have people who are impacted by applying for aid.”

Ms. Petrillo commented, “In most cases, we only admit students who have applied for financial aid if we are able to fund them through our financial aid budget.”

Ms. Petrillo remarked that 25% of currently enrolled domestic students self-identify as students of color and that one of the enrollment goals is to make sure we maintain or, if possible, increase that percentage. The school’s enrollment also includes approximately 17% international students.

On how the Admissions Office estimates and controls the number of incoming students, Ms. Petrillo explained, “Enrollment management is both an art and a science. We start with our overall enrollment goal of 690 students. We subtract the number of graduating seniors and estimate the number of students who may choose not to reenroll in order to project the number of spaces we will need to fill to meet the 690 goal. Then using historical trends we look at our yield and admit rates in those various categories to determine the number of students to accept. Some years our projections are spot on, other years we may be surprised by the yield rate in particular category.”

Revisit Days also play an important role in the process; the Admissions Office starts preparing for them 5-6 months in advance. When planning Revisit Days they consider date selection, impact on the community, special schedules, programming, and more. During the revisit days, the Admissions Office broadcast Loomis as “a community valuing the diversity of each person and idea, a place where students are respected for who they are and who they want to become, and where they are challenged and supported by their faculty and peers alike,” said Ms. Petrillo.

Ms. Petrillo described the incoming class of 2022 as smart, talented, authentic, community-minded, and kind.

## Fast Facts:

1. Approximately 2000 students apply every year.
2. Approximately 500 students will be offered admission.
3. LC’s goal is to enroll 225 new students.
4. Last year, 61% of acceptances were for the 9th grade, 26% for 10th grade, 6% for 11th grade, 1% for 12th grade, and 6% for post-graduates.
5. Depending on the year and space available, the percentage of new sophomore applicants offered admission can be the same as, or higher than, the percentage of freshmen applicants offered admission.
6. Dr. Culbert is an ambassador for the school and meets with many prospective families throughout the year. She does not read files or make admission decisions but is kept informed about applications and acceptances, and acts as a source of advice if Admissions is facing a particularly challenging decision.

“ Each piece of the application file is a piece of the puzzle — any one piece alone can’t give us the full picture. ”

## CHANGES IN SUMMER READING?

Ethan Alford '20 | Contributor



Graphic courtesy of BenBen Singhasaneh '18

Changes have been made in the required reading list for this summer. The main change will be the addition of “starred” choices to the “top picks” of various departments. After the students and faculty return from break, each department will host book discussions on its “starred” choice. According to Dr. John Morrell, head of the English Department, “Students will choose one of the starred books and in the fall participate in the discussion on that book with other students who also chose it.”

There will still be an all-school read that will be chosen by Dr. Culbert, and the chosen book will pertain to the school theme suggested by the student council each year. There will also still be a mandatory read for each grade. These required books change slightly from year to year. Some of the book choices have changed on the summer reading brochure.

“Last year, one of our convocation speakers here was Andre Dubus, and after he came and spoke, we wanted to take advantage of the enthusiasm and momentum of his visit, so we added one of his books

to the summer reading list. This year Mohsin Hamid came to visit and students seemed excited about the convocation so in order to capitalize, once again we have added another Mohsin Hamid book to the list. We took the book by Dubus off. It was an easy substitution so we tried to give students an option to explore authors who they have met or encountered more deeply,” said Dr. Morrell.

Prior to last year, students had an all-school read and three required books for each grade. In the years before, all summer reading books were chosen by the English Department. However, as the English Department decided to fully enrich the summer reading list, other departments were invited to contribute their own books to the list. Dr. Morrell commented that “the plan for next year is to add more structure to that choice reading and each department or organization that wants to will pick a book from their suggested reading list to star, and for [the] choice read, students can pick from any of the starred books.”



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# Loomis Chaffee Log

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## ARM US ALL WITH KINDNESS

Beatrice Dang '19 | *Opinions Editor*

“Arm us all with kindness.” These were powerful words from 19-year-old Tyler Suarez in memory of his aunt, Sandy Hook Elementary School Principal Dawn Hochsprung, at the Hartford March for Our Lives on March 24. Tyler spoke passionately about his aunt, who was killed in the Sandy Hook shooting, and demanded that policymakers push for stricter gun control.

Tyler, a student at the University of Bridgeport, led the rallying cry before a crowd of around 13,000 protesters— the same age of some seniors and PGs at Loomis Chaffee— alongside other student leaders. Students and youth across the nation have become the leaders of this movement. The protesters themselves also represented a wide range of ages, from elementary school students to adults.

One day before the march, the LC administration held an all-school meeting to discuss an incident in which a student made a shooting threat against the school, and then later claimed this threat was a “joke.” Consequently, the following Tuesday the school administered an active shooter drill in order to simulate an emergency that in no way should ever be considered a “joke.”

During the drill, I was with my tennis team on the lower courts. Most students were aware of the time and place they would be during the drill, making the drill feel ironically predictable and routine. We gathered together to discuss a plan of action, carefully placing down rackets and calmly congregating. When we started discussing our options, I found myself feeling uncomfortable to say the least. But I do not think it will ever feel real until it actually is real because Loomis has always felt as safe as a second home to me.

When my coach asked us, “What if the shooter were coming from that direction?” and pointed to the road behind me, I felt a brief pulse of fear rush through my veins, almost as if I expected to turn around and really see someone there. We plotted an escape route, and I pondered the speed at which I would have to run in order to beat a bullet. But then again, no matter how careful our planning, how calm our demeanors, how perfect our route, none of this practice could ensure our safety in a real, unpredictable situation. Nonetheless, it was an important drill to practice calm and controlled decision making.

A drill cannot truly simulate a real emergency. If there had been a real shooter on campus, we would not be calm, and we likely would not

have a careful plan. Of course, it does not hurt to practice. We can maintain some sense of security by practicing drills, leading discussions, and just looking at the numbers— school shootings are still rare.

The only real security can come from change in the capital, from change in gun legislature. Arming good guys with guns, teachers at that, will not solve this problem, and I doubt this would make students feel more safe. High school students, teachers, parents, old and young are saying these same things, so why are our policy makers not listening? Gun violence is not a problem that impacts one group of people, it is a universal plague attacking our safety and our right to life. And what about self defense and the Second Amendment? The right to self defense should not equate to the right to own a semi automatic weapon designed for mass slaughter, and I do not believe our forefathers wrote the Second Amendment as justification to own weapons that could kill a classroom of elementary school children in mere seconds.

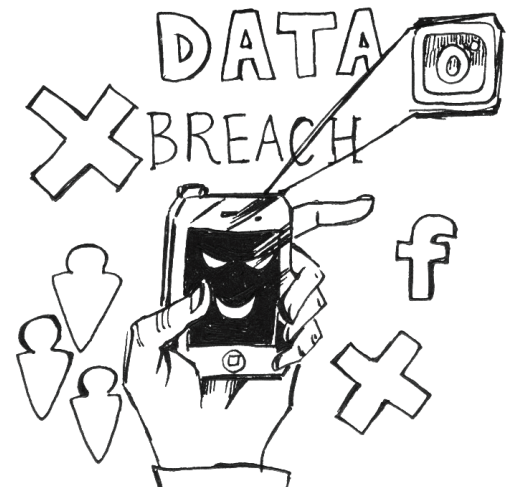
We have a problem that cannot be solved by arming more people and furthering the circulation of guns; rather, we should limit access to guns designed as killing machines. Assault weapons have been behind some of the most gruesome mass and school shootings in history— from Columbine to Newtown to Pulse to Vegas to Parkland. The list goes on and on and on, yet it is difficult to bring to mind any recent instances in which an assault weapon was used by a citizen to protect others.

Change in legislature will not come overnight. Several weeks have passed since the Parkland shooting, yet it is difficult to find any obvious changes. At the March for Our Lives, speakers urged us to register to vote, actively take part in politics at all levels, and reach out to policy makers with our demands for stricter gun control.

But back to Tyler's message: “Arm us all with kindness.” School shootings have further stigmatized mental illness, and social media has become a platform for politicians to bully activists and vice versa and has led to a lot of nasty words being thrown from all sides. At schools across the country, students who need the most help are being marginalized, to a point where preventative measures against potential shooters will always come too late. Our nation needs to grow from these horrible tragedies, and can only do so through cooperation, inclusion, and kindness.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POSES THREAT TO PERSONAL PRIVACY

Nina Gildor '19 | *Staff Writer*



Graphic courtesy of Ashley Chung '19

I first heard about the Facebook data breach on Snapchat. Ironic, right? In this generation, we all carry a digital duplicate of ourselves in a portable, black, rectangular device; this small device is incredibly powerful, and it has access to all of our passwords, emails, texts, phone calls, credit card numbers, social security numbers, and every piece of private information that many of us lock behind just a four digit code. Our phones have become extensions of ourselves, so when they are hacked it feels as if an intruder has infringed upon our privacy. Yet, despite this risk, many of us choose to create social media profiles that contain personal information.

This recent Facebook data breach was a huge violation of privacy for 50 million users and has cast a dark shadow on the safety of social media. A data mining company, Cambridge Analytica, stole the information from millions of trusting users. Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook, finally issued a formal apology days later, promising to improve security, but this response was in no way an end to this scandal, or even an end to the plummet in Facebook's net worth, which had already fallen by 61 billion dollars.

However, this breach was not the first sign of a threat to our cyber security; as technology continues to advance, new threats arise, such as those during the 2016 presidential election. Facebook has suffered severe criticism for its possible influence in the election. Throughout the presidential campaign, the possibility of Russian hacking, data leaks, and voter fraud all contributed to the developing fears about national cyber security. Our entire lives are encased in this invisible digital world of social media, but every time we look at the black screen we never truly know who is looking back.

Every time a new website or app asks me for my phone number, email, or other personal information, I give it power over me. This Facebook breach must act as an example of the danger of the dark, ominous world that is your smartphone. While social media platforms may claim to protect your personal information, such as being private on Instagram or blocking someone on snapchat, once something enters the digital world, everyone has access to it. If someone violated my rights by hacking my Facebook, they probably wouldn't find much, but when it comes to national security as a whole, our American right to privacy becomes even more important.

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# LC EXPLORES THE GALAPAGOS

Angela Wang '20 | Staff Writer



Mrs. Marley Matlack and Mr. Neil Chaudhary pose with LC students at Las Grietas in Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Matlack

Following in the footsteps of Charles Darwin, fifteen Loomis Chaffee students and science faculty members traveled to the Galápagos Islands during March break, not only to appreciate the beauty of the natural world, but also to familiarize themselves with the research conducted there. “Even the Galápagos, isolated as they may seem, suffer from the negative side effects of human industrial activity,” commented Mr. Neil Chaudhary '05, science teacher.

During the trip, the group participated in two research studies. First, the group contributed to a growing catalog of sea turtle photo identifications. Mr. Chaudhary explained that on the sides of sea turtles’ faces are scales arranged in unique patterns, just as fingerprints are unique to each person. While swimming with the sea turtles, students took careful photographs. Those pictures were then added to the catalog of the University of San Francisco Quito.

“The goal of this project is to develop a better understanding of sea turtle population, behavior, and migratory patterns,” explained Mr. Chaudhary. “We consider sea turtles to be useful indicators of the health of their ecosystems. Gathering information about sea turtles helps us to understand the health of the ecosystems they participate in.”

Moreover, students were delighted to have the experience to investigate the mysterious undersea. Megan Lam '20 commented, “One of the most memorable things we did on the trip was snorkeling with sharks, sea turtles and seahorses. It was truly amazing

to be so close to the wildlife, while simultaneously heart-wrenching to know how our lifestyle is putting theirs at risk.”

The group also conducted surveys of beaches to assess the extent and character of plastic pollution. They collected and characterized plastics found at several beaches across the Galápagos. By taking notes on the height of the tide, the wind speed and direction, the time of day, the time since the last known beach cleanup, and several other details, students were able to understand the factors that affect plastic deposition on these beaches.

This research inspired Paris Cipollone '18 significantly as she advocated for banning plastic bags in the bookstore and offering reusable bags at school. Paris stated, “My biggest take away from the trip is how much of an emphasis you can put on the environment if you are willing to.” Informed that in Galápagos, 97% of its lands are national and only 3% are either farms or households, Paris came to understand how people can work together toward preserving the natural environment with great effort and determination.

This was the first trip to the Galápagos Islands organized by Loomis Chaffee’s Alvard Center for Global & Environmental Studies. The participants eagerly appealed for a more sustainable environment and hoped their experiences would raise considerable awareness on campus.

## UTAH INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Arjun Ahilan '20 | Contributor



LC students at White Canyon

Photo courtesy of Mr. Ewen Ross

(continued from front page)

Since we had to carry everything that we could possibly need, each of our packs was filled to the brim. The straps that had initially seemed so well-padded cut into our shoulders. Whenever we stumbled over a loose rock, the packs shifted and threatened to dislodge and disgorge all our supplies. The sleeping bags that had seemed so welcoming and warm were no match for the nine-degree nighttime temperatures in the canyons. The ostensibly sturdy rafts sprang leaks and left us damp and cold on the shore.

The physical challenges of the eight-day backpacking adventure paled in comparison to its psychological challenges. We had no connection to the outside world for the entire week. The days were long; the nights were silent. The cliffs towered above our trail, and the river guided our rafts downstream. Over the course of the week, as we became acclimated to these conditions, our outlook on the trip began to change.

“The Utah IEP was transformative for me,” commented Aresh Pourkavoos '21. “After backpacking for long hours and sleeping through frigid nights, I have learned that the challenges I face in everyday life - school work, sports, and friends - are not as daunting as they seemed.”

As the trip progressed, we began to ignore the discomforts of the trail, seeing details of the rugged canyon environment. Our guides taught us about how the canyons came to form, and how the plant life was sustained in this

desert environment. We also learned how to “Leave No Trace Behind” while we hiked and were taught how to preserve environments. This meant that we had to hold onto everything that we brought into the canyon, including all of our trash. When we entered, the canyons appeared untouched by humans; when we left the canyons, we made sure that they stayed that way.

Looking back at our experience, we can all see how much we have grown in such a short time; from the challenges we faced, we all became friends with people whom we had never met before.

Alex Gray '19 said, “Because of this experience I am more confident in my outdoor skills and friends with other inspirational souls.”

This outdoor exploration was unique and was a great experience for all of us. At first many of us did not know what to expect; however, when we faced hardships, we all managed to get through them.

When reflecting upon her experience, Ms. Steinfeld stated, “From long 8-9 mile hiking days, to rappels into White Canyon, to making dinner in the dark, to getting up in the cold, to floating down the San Juan river and having to jump out because the boat was stuck on a rock or the boat had a hole in the bottom, this group came together in every imaginable way.”

## NEW PELICANS FLOCK TO CAMPUS

Jack Glassie '21 | Contributor

On March 29, April 2, April 4, and April 6, Loomis Chaffee hosted hundreds of accepted students on the Island for revisit days. The revisit students shadowed the currently enrolled students, attended informative panels, and joined in the student life sessions which included interaction with various student-athletes and extra-curricular club members.

Revisit days are often a key decision maker for applicants as they can reflect if Loomis Chaffee will truly provide the experience and challenges during their high school career.

Walker Craig '22, felt that he “got an excellent sense of the Loomis community as a whole” during his revisit day. Similarly, he stated that although he “had previously expected the day to be somewhat awkward and different” in comparison to his original campus tour, he actually found his revisit day host and other LC members “very helpful” in displaying the best and honest view of Loomis.

The admissions office hopes to enroll 225 new students for the upcoming academic year.

For those who consider themselves students with a main focus, whether they play a sport, participate in theater, or do community service, the revisit days can be very important in connecting each student with the programs and the Loomis community members who are involved with each program.

For Douglas Mercer, a prospective student and a lacrosse player, “Being at the varsity breakfast and then getting shown around by a varsity athlete was super helpful.” The ability to see “how the programs work from both the coaches and players perspectives” helped him to gain a better sense of Loomis Chaffee and its community.

# BLACK AMERICA: THE COMPLEXITIES OF BLACK AMERICAN IDENTITY

Minna Gao '19 | News Editor

(continued from front page)

“My idea of blackness has always been proud, strong, and striving,” said Dean Sasser. She explained that though she has always proudly embraced her black identity, she did struggle in living with the black stereotypes in her younger years. Growing up, Dean Sasser wasn’t always accepted by the black community; she was mocked because of how she spoke, and was told by some of her peers that she was not “black enough” and “sounded or was acting white.”

Kaitlin shared that when she was younger, because of her St. Lucian parent’s pale skin color, she wasn’t fully aware of her black identity until fifth grade. Her strict parents were also very disapproving of the American black culture, and they told Kaitlin to not be “black.” Kaitlin was ridiculed by some of her peers because she listened to “white music” and was called “Oreo.” She struggled to find who she identifies with, but eventually decided to embrace the black culture and her black identity.

Mr. Dial, who is part Native American, shared his experiences of growing up as a person of mixed race. Though Mr. Dial personally associates with his Native American heritage, many people immediately label him as black upon meeting him and continue to do so. Lily, who is one fourth Indian and one fourth Canadian, grew up in Ghana identifying as mixed, but upon arriving in the U.S, her skin color renders her to be automatically lumped into the “black box” and be subject to the negative connotations associated with blackness in America. Margaret, in a later interview, expressed her views on labeling and observed that “though Africa is one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse continents, the heritage and ethnicity

of many Africans are overshadowed by their race upon arrival in the States.”

The panel then discussed the origins of the common black stereotypes. Amaiya addressed the “angry black women” stereotype, explaining that this stereotype comes with the assumption that all black women are loud and have a tendency to fight. Her awareness that many associate her with these stereotypes causes her to have to be especially careful in Hot Topic Discussions and in conversations so as not to be perceived and dismissed as another “angry black woman.” Simone also shared her struggles with stereotypes in the Winter Musical “Shrek,” as after she passed the audition for the show, some people, likely unaware of the significance of their casual comment, told her that she will be perfect for the Donkey, who was a character known for his boisterousness. “This institution wasn’t built for someone like me,” said Mr. Dial, reflecting on the racism deeply rooted in the foundation and history of this country. He also noted that the portrayal of African Americans in media and pop culture reinforces the negative stereotypes.

Multiple panel members have experiences of being disadvantaged or being rejected because of racial stereotyping and racism. Richie shared how being black hinders her in developing romantic relationships, as she has been turned down by others only because of her race. Dean Sasser shared a similar experience, as her husband’s parents, though they now accept her as a family member, at first refused to meet her for three years after they found out that she was black. “It is frustrating that one is made to feel that they have to present their ‘credentials’ to prove themselves instead of being just accepted for who they are,” reflected Dean Sasser in a later e-interview.

In light of the recent junior email chain that lunged into a tense exchange regarding cultural appropriation, Margaret asked for the panel members’ opinions on the issue, where two white Lacrosse players were photographed wearing a traditionally black hairstyle. In America, a country generally considered as a cultural melting-pot, the line between cultural appreciation and appropriation is often blurred. Many members explained that what makes a gesture offensive and turns it into cultural appropriation is one’s purpose behind the action. “It’s not ok if someone does it for the wrong reasons or sees it as a joke,” said Kaitlin. Amaiya explained the significance of hair in black culture in that black hairstyles such as cornrows are made for their hair and act as a protective hairstyle. “[the hairstyles] are made for our hair, so don’t do it to look cool or to get attention,” said Amaiya.

“At first I was kind of on the fence about the email chain, but [the panel] helped me understand the issue of cultural appropriation from their perspective and how important hair is in their culture,” reflected Olivia Malcolmson ’20.

The panel affirmed that the microaggressions, stereotypes, labeling, and cultural appropriations that have been discussed all have roots from their day-to-day lives, and are challenges they continue to face in their everyday lives. “I was very grateful for them to be willing to share their experiences with us,” said Mr. Jackson Fleming, who attended the panel. Though he understands the racial tension of the current world and wasn’t surprised to hear that the panel members continue to face such microaggressions on campus, Mr. Fleming reflected that it’s helpful to learn of some specific instances and to remind himself to never “do anything unintentionally offensive.”

## MOHSIN HAMID VISITS THE ISLAND

Anya Sastry '20 | Staff Writer



Mr. Hamid addresses the LC community

Photo courtesy of LC Communications

During the summer of 2017, students and faculty were required to read the all-school book, *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid. Following the journey of the two main characters Nadia and Saeed, who are refugees fleeing a war-torn city, this novel of magical realism explores love in a time of war and violence through a story that captures the global crises affecting our current-day world. On March 27, Mohsin Hamid traveled to the Loomis Chaffee campus and gave a talk that delved into his past, his time as an author, and the themes within *Exit West*.

Born in Lahore, Pakistan, Mr. Hamid moved to California at a young age while his father was pursuing a PhD at Stanford University. Describing his experiences of growing up on an American collegiate campus, Mr. Hamid related his childhood to “growing up in a child United Nations,” as there were kids from all over the planet. He then continued on in his talk to explain how he eventually moved back to Pakistan at the age of nine and “learned at a young age to be a bit like a chameleon,” adapting to and integrating into the different worlds and cultures he experienced in order to avoid standing out.

Later on in his life, Mr. Hamid realized that, “[he] wasn’t the only person who was feeling different...in fact, every human being feels foreign to a certain extent in different ways,” which led him to think that maybe he is not so different from everyone else, in the sense that maybe others have been migrating too. After exploring these ideas for a few minutes, Mr. Hamid went on to explain how this provided the backdrop for why he wrote *Exit West*.

Throughout the convocation, Mr. Hamid explained how *Exit West* was his reaction to the trends that he had seen building, trends of thinking of migrants as bad, of regarding the mixing of different cultures, peoples, and ideas as bad.

Before the writing process began, Mr. Hamid thought about a number of things concerning the novel: what the story was going to be, what the form of the story was going to be, what it would sound like, what the rhythm of it would be. Asking himself those questions allowed him to consider the main themes in the novel on a deeper level.

During the convocation, Mr. Hamid talked about how *Exit West* is a novel about a breakup, a story about something coming to an end, and correctly observed that so often we are told that things can be permanent; however, as Mr. Hamid said, “To be a human being is to be a transient creature,” and the novel explores the idea of whether it is possible to find beauty and optimism even in the face of hardship.

Mr. Hamid also discussed the concept of the magical doors that played a crucial part in the novel, relating it to the mobile phones we have that allow “our consciousness to leave the physical space where our bodies reside,” phones that are like “this magical door through which your mind goes anywhere, instantaneously, decoupling from your body and just going.” When going through the writing process, Mr. Hamid asked himself, “What if, instead of just sending our minds through these little black rectangles, these black rectangles began to appear in our world and our bodies could go through them?” and that idea became the basis for the magical doors through which the refugees in *Exit West* migrated from country to country.

During a more intimate question and answer session with Mr. Hamid after the convocation, a question was asked about why the war-torn country that Nadia and Saeed are forced to flee from is never named. In response to the question, Mr. Hamid talked about how naming that country, how branding it, would have brought in all kinds of meaning, most unintended. Giving it a name that readers

would be familiar with would bring in preconceived notions, which Mr. Hamid wanted to stay away from. Within his answer, he mentioned how it is better to describe it than give it a name, as describing it would get at what it actually is versus what stereotypes make it out to be. Finally, Mr. Hamid wanted the place to be open to the reader’s interpretation, something that would allow the place to become closer to the reader.

Another question was asked about the significance behind the unnamed characters and their stories, to which Mr. Hamid answered that his goal was to achieve a pointillist kind of idea and he wanted to have micro-stories brought together to create a bigger picture. He also discussed how those micro-stories were a way for the reader to experience different viewpoints throughout the novel.

In response to the convocation, Olivia Malcolmson ’20 touched upon the early childhood experiences that Mr. Hamid shared at the beginning of his talk and said, “I really enjoyed the convocation and I thought that many students were able to identify with Mr. Hamid’s childhood desire to fit in.” Another student, Lily Verna ’19, commented on how “Mohsin Hamid’s story about juggling multiple cultures was intriguing and there were many students who could relate to it,” and then went on to mention how “he also helped clarify some themes in *Exit West* by comparing the ‘doors’ to smartphone screens.”

Through his talk, Mr. Hamid emphasized one of the main themes prevalent in the novel, the idea that over time, we all change and grow as a result of the diverse experiences and challenges we face, an idea that makes us consider the fact that maybe everyone is not as different as we believe ourselves to be. After all, as Mr. Hamid said in *Exit West*, “We are all migrants through time.”

Liam Scott '19 | *Melange* Editor

ISSUE 7'S SATIRICAL HEADLINES...

## THIS JUST IN

Five LC day students have recently become millionaires, and they did so all on their own. They didn't invest in Bitcoin; they didn't win the lottery. Instead, they tapped into the boarder's need for all non-Flik food. "It was pretty easy," commented one of the five. "I mean, supply and demand or something, ya know? I mean, boarders will pay you anything for outside food. Starbucks, Dunkin', Chipotle, you name it. I started with coffee, and before I knew it- BAM. I was rich. I guess the lesson is pretty obvious- never underestimate a deprived teenager's desire for coffee."

## LOST: OVERPASS BY KRAVIS AND CLARK

The overpass by Kravis and Clark has gone missing, and the Loomis community is understandably devastated. This overpass was a friend to all, keeping countless Loomis students and faculty safe from rain. Now we must revel in precipitation. A junior was available to comment. "What monster would steal our overpass? What kind of hooligan would do that? What the heck do they even want with a deconstructed overpass? I have literally no respite from the rain when I walk from Founders to Chaf-fee, and I want whoever is responsible for our suffering, our increased dampness, to come forward before we all catch terrible colds."

## FRESHMAN JUST KNOWS IT'LL ALL GET WORSE FROM HERE

An LC freshman is apprehensive about the rest of her Loomis career. "I see all of the older kids, and I know stuff is just going to get worse. My life is going to get harder, and I honestly still need to come to terms with that hard fact. At first I was optimistic. Maybe I'd be fine. But those thoughts were simply idealistic. I'm not gonna be fine- I'm gonna get a lot worse before I get back to being fine, in fact. But it's okay. Recognizing that it'll get a lot worse from here is probably an important step in dealing with all of this anyway."



## TEN WAYS TO CUT THE DINING HALL LINE



Portrait of Alice Cho '19

Photo by Prestige Portraits

**Alice Cho '19** | *Contributor*

1. Make the whole line play leap frog, and once you leap all the way to the front of the line, stop the game.
2. Dress up as a snake, and slither through everyone's feet until you reach the front of the line.
3. Yell, "I'm fat and I NEED to feed myself," and then cut the line.
4. Throw water on some people, and when they go wash themselves off, take their spot.
5. Tell the people in the front that you have a magic trick that requires them to be blindfolded. Once they are blindfolded, get your food.
6. Get a bucket, fill it to the rim with water, ask the person in the front of the line to hold it, get your food, and never look back.
7. Print out fake "no homework" passes, and ask Dr. Culbert to sign them. Give them out to people in exchange for their spot in line.
8. Cut the line, and if someone says "excuse me" respond by saying, "It's not all about you, gosh."
9. Cut the line, and if someone says, "You're cutting!" say, "Yaaaaa betchaaaaaaa!"
10. It was supposed to be ten, but I am tired, so I am going to sleep. Just pretend this one was funny.

## NICE MEME!

**Tommy Shi '18** | *Contributor*

**I**t's 2018. I am here to hand out two consolation prizes for the great adults who tried to be relatable.

The prize for best effort goes to Dean Donegan, for his beautiful weekly reports on the weekend activities. I would like to applaud the effort that went into finding fresh graphics for the weekly open gyms. He must have trolled dozens of meme websites to accumulate that amount of fresh, dank memes. At the same time, it is hilarious to imagine that a dean might have memes saved on his computer. Despite mocking the graphics of the weekend activity emails, I would like to sincerely thank Dean Donegan for his dedicated efforts in adding new activities for unappreciative high schoolers.

The prize for best corporate PR department goes to Flik Dining. They have truly brought upon us a golden age of artwork. Works such as "Flik so GOUDA" and "Who Touched My Grill Cheese" are truly ahead of their times. While some say that those memes are terrible and out of touch, I disagree. The naysayers cannot appreciate the avant-garde nature of the advanced graphics. Those memes should be framed and displayed in a modern art museum. Those beautiful memes reveal the duality of men and their inner conflict. The newest installment, "Ordered A Salad, Realized It's Grilled Cheese Day," depicts a koala gazing morosely into the distance. Truly a piece of modern art. The morose koala chewing on eucalyptus leaves symbolizes the corporate, mass produced nature of the food, revealing that we are the victim of industrialization.

Anyways, thanks for all the memes.



Photo by Sam Goldfarb '18

# LOVE, SIMON REVIEW

Liam Scott '19 | *Melange Editor*

Summed up in a few words, *Love, Simon* is a movie that is laugh-out-loud funny, thoughtfully moving, and intelligently cliché. Simon, played by Nick Robinson, is a gay high school student navigating the challenging waters of coming out who emails another anonymous gay student at school. Don't worry- I won't reveal much more of the plot than that.

*Love, Simon* has an admittedly rather cliché plot. There have been countless movies that follow high school romance- and specifically the "someone likes me, I like them, I wonder who they might be" type of plot. That is frankly the type of plot we are dealing with when it comes to *Love, Simon*.

The only reason that I don't view this typical plot as negative is because Simon is gay and is in the process of coming out. There are few well-done LGBT movies out there, and almost all of them highlight the struggles and the challenges of being LGBT. These movies don't show that you can be gay and have similar romantic experiences as straight people.

This movie has been criticized for Simon's relatively easy coming out process. But why is it bad that his family and community were accepting? Why is it bad to give LGBT viewers the hope that their experiences can be similar? The LGBT community craves equality, specifically in regards to representation in media; having a typical love-story plot, but instead making it a gay love-story is that equality. This is the

mainstream love story that the gay community needs.

That was the more serious analysis, and now I'm going to talk about other things that I found really appealing. Primarily, *Love, Simon* was surprisingly hilarious. Between the serious stuff were genuinely funny scenes that caused the entire movie theatre to erupt in laughter. My favorite funny character would have to be Ms. Albright, the drama teacher.

This movie is also really suspenseful. I won't explain because doing so would spoil the movie, but the suspense is obvious when you watch it.

Simon's family also has a really nice dynamic that should prove relatable for anyone. The mom, Emily Spier, played by Jennifer Garner, has all of her stuff together and likes to tease everyone else, and the dad, Jack Spier, played by Josh Duhamel, is goofy and sensitive and relies on Simon for a lot of help; together they have what seems like a perfect marriage. Simon, and his little sister, Nora, played by Talitha Bateman, have a classically endearing brother-sister relationship. The family dog, Bieber, is also adorable. Together they make up a typical American family, and that helps all viewers see themselves in the movie.

If you have not yet watched *Love, Simon*, I highly recommend you do. In addition to potentially becoming iconic in gay culture, this movie is funny for all, relatable for all, and moving for all.

## YOU'RE NOT AN LC STUDENT UNTIL...

Allen Park, Jia Yu Cheung, Cathy Hyeon '18  
*Managing Editor, Contributor, Graphics Manager*

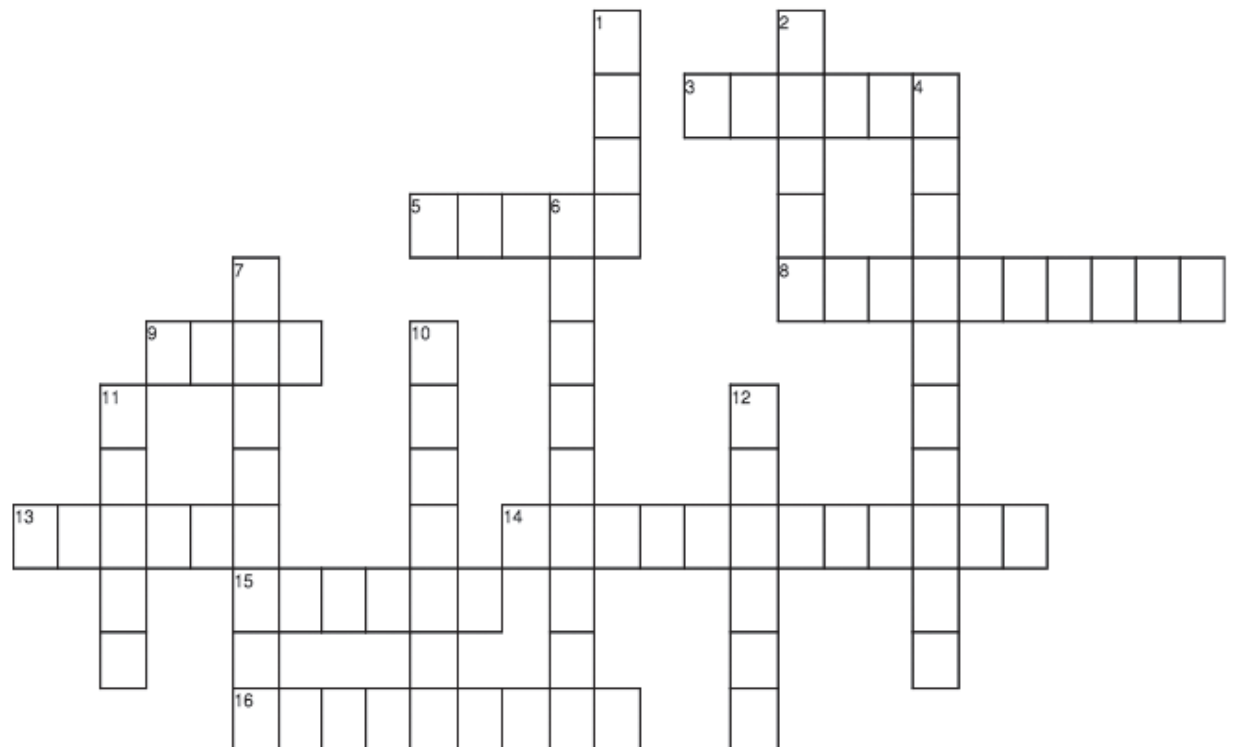
1. You walk all the way to town to go to Bart's or Get Baked, only to have to turn back because it's closed.
2. You rush to class at 8:30 and realize it's a Thursday.
3. You pull an all-nighter studying for a test, writing a lab report, and finishing a problem set all in one night.
4. Someone shushes you and points at the sign in the silent zone.
5. You have to chase down dorm faculty to get a per signed.
6. You fail Sunday room inspection.
7. You have to search "Beth Fitzsimmons" on your Outlook to open your mailbox.
8. You ask a stranger to let you into your dorm.
9. You eat pasta for all three meals.
10. You plan on running the loop but end up walking half of it.
11. You have trash workjob, but you end up putting it in the bathroom bins.
12. You steal someone's food from the fridge (no name, fair game).
13. You need to explain where your dorm is to your Uber Eats driver.
14. You find a day student to get you Dunkin Donuts.
15. You go to Dom's Sunday morning, but there's an hour wait.
16. Ten different fruits and animals follow you on Instagram @lcbananas @lcsquirrels
17. You wait for Parents Weekend and Revisit Days for good food.
18. You have to settle for Lay's and Cheetos over a Chicken Tender Combo with a XXX Vitamin Water.

# SENIOR SPRING

Ayana Kelly '18 | *Contributor*

## ANSWERS

1. Bees
2. Gnats
3. Finals
4. Springfest
5. Deeps
6. Promposal
7. Hammocks
8. Seniorpath
9. Quad
10. College
11. Barts
12. Senior
13. Cardio
14. Commencement
15. Coffee
16. Spikeball



### Across

3. after four years, seniors don't take them
5. what you get when you skip class so you can hang out with friends on the quad
8. rite of passage that the juniors will soon have
9. where you'll find everyone during the day and the seniors during study hall
13. the sport with a waiting list
14. the best day for seniors
15. something your day student friend refuses to get you everyday
16. net game on the quad

### Down

1. flying insects that won't stop following you everywhere
2. mass of insects in the meadows
4. where you can dunk the deans
6. cheesy puns on posters and shirtless guys
7. let you literally hang in the trees
10. where seniors will be next year
11. where you'll walk and spend three hours eating fries and drinking shakes
12. slide when seniors give up on classes

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# ANOTHER DOMINANT SEASON FOR GIRLS VARSITY HOCKEY

Lauren Hinton '18 | *Managing Editor*

(continued from front page)

They won five out of their first six matchups, tying Nobles and Greenough 1-1 in their second game of the schedule. LC scored early in the first period to establish a lead the girls held until the final moments of the game. Nobles snuck a goal at the very end of the third period, causing the game to result in a tie, the third Nobles tie in the last four seasons for girls hockey. Having to face one of their toughest opponents in only their second regular season game, the team's tie with Nobles was an early indication of their ability to compete with some of the strongest teams in New England.

At the PKO Invitational Hockey Tournament in December, the team won two of its three games, though their close 5-4 loss against Andover stalled them from advancing. Having been champions in the 2016-2017 season, elimination was a frustrating result. Nonetheless, the girls responded to a disappointing outcome with a decisive 6-0 victory over Buckingham Browne & Nichols in their first game of the new year.

Resilience thus became a defining characteristic for girls hockey.

Specifically in a matchup against Kent, LC earned a victory on account of their confident approach to the matchup. Senior captain Erin Levine expresses that the team "played as though they had nothing to lose." With determination and without fear, the girls earned a victory against one of the year's toughest opponents. As Erin puts it, her team "won the day with their spirit."

Their strength of mentality again showed in their game against Tabor Academy, when the pelicans were down a goal at the start of the third period. Responding solidly, the girls tied the game in the third and edged out a 3-2 victory in overtime.

The second half of their season showed both improvement and consistency. After losing to Taft twice in regular season play, the team went on a six-game winning streak which helped to secure their position at number four in the New England Class A tournament. The quarterfinal

match was a showing of the team's wide range of talent and drive for success. They shutout the St. Paul's School by a five-goal margin, beginning the tournament by proving themselves to be a contender among the other Class A teams.

In their final game of the season, the girls lost a tight rematch against Nobles by a score of 1-0. With a performance to be proud of, the team outshot Nobles 28-18, yet they could not score the equalizing goal. As in the 2016-2017 season, girls hockey lost in the semi-final match of the tournament.

Taylor has appreciated her time playing hockey for LC. She is specifically thankful for the dynamics of friendship and togetherness she felt during her hockey career. Taylor says, "The culture of the program and the types of people that make up the team taught me the importance of teamwork and trusting the process...In my fourteen years of playing hockey, nothing compares to the [years] throughout my Loomis career."

## NFL OFFSEASON MADNESS

Matthew Weng '21 | *Staff Writer*



Wide receiver Jarvis Landry in the 2018 Pro Bowl

Graphics courtesy of AP Images / Phelan M. Ebenhack

After the 2017-2018 NFL season came to a dramatic end, the new league year has started, and so has the crazy and unpredictable free-agency period. Free-agency has become increasingly entertaining recently. This offseason, the craze continues as many teams try to replicate the success of the top teams. This article will summarize several of the most influential and unexpected transactions during this offseason.

The Cleveland Browns underperformed again last year. Winless, the Browns sunk deeper and deeper into desperation. In order to break their trend of failure in free-agency, the Browns sought two extremely valuable players. To begin, the Browns acquired pro-bowl receiver Jarvis Landry with two draft picks, looking to overhaul their sub-par receiving lineup. A valuable asset to the Dolphins' offense, Landry has put up several 1000-yard seasons since being drafted in the second round of the 2014 draft. In addition, the Browns also added an athletic quarterback in Tyrod Taylor who would most likely start in 2018. Those two moves ignited the spirits of their fans as the Browns seems to finally have a future after years of defeat.

The Los Angeles Rams also made significant strides during this off-season. They traded two pro-bowl cornerbacks, Aqib Talib and Marcus Peters. In addition, they have also added Ndamukong Suh, an athletic defensive tackle who is known for his physical play. With those three new additions and the resigning of Nickell Robey-Coleman, their star cornerback, the Rams seems to have created a facsimile of the dominant 2016 Denver Broncos defense nicknamed the "No Fly Zone." The Rams have a tremendous secondary along with a powerful pass-rushing unit. The setback with the loss of star linebacker Ogbertree, however, became rather innocuous with the addition of several key pieces on their defense.

Even though the New England Patriots started the off-season in a rather sedate manner, making few moves, they acquired and also lost several key pieces in the last several weeks. The Patriots lost starting running back Dion Lewis, cornerback Malcolm Butler, and most importantly, left

tackle Nate Solder. However, the Patriot seemingly filled most of the holes acquiring free agents such as Jeremy Hill and Jason McCourty. When asked about the plan to replace the players who left, head coach Bill Belichick, as expected, delivered the opposite of a stentorian message as he simply mumbled, "We'll see." No matter what occurs during the off-season however, Belichick would always find a way to preserve an atmosphere of decorum in the team and prevent undisciplined mistakes.

Now would be a fitting time to discuss a blockbuster deal that went on between the two teams above. The Patriots let go of Brandin Cooks, who posted an impressive 1000-yard season with 7 TDs in his first year, to the Rams. The deal involves the Rams receiving Cooks as well as a fourth-round draft pick in exchange for the 23rd pick and a sixth rounder. For some, this might seem like a loss for the Patriots as they lost one of their most productive offensive weapons, but a close look at the details around this trade will make reveal Belichick's purposeful planning. Firstly, Cooks' contract would expire next year, making him a free-agent without any trade value. It would be rather wise to deal him this offseason when he could still be exchanged for some picks. It is quite obvious as long as Belichick is the real GM that they won't pay Cooks the money he wants. The Patriots have Edelman, Hogan, Dorsett, Mitchell, Britt and newly-acquired Cordarrelle Patterson as offensive weapons. That is a rather formidable group already, not to mention the beast that is Rob Gronkowski. They would be okay without Cooks. As for Cooks, even though he claimed earlier this month that he wants to finish his career in New England, he still has a strong team to play on next year.

The upcoming draft also includes many rather controversial athletes such as Baker Mayfield. Mayfield played for the Oklahoma Sooners last season and became the reigning Heisman winner. However, while displaying his athletic prowess, he also showed poor sportsmanship. He also lacks a high football-IQ, often making plays with his athletic abilities instead of making an intelligent read. However, he would most likely acquire a huge amount of knowledge in that area working with a professional QB coach who would

help him refine his skills as well as his football IQ.

Football fans are also currently discussing the first four draft picks. With the Browns holding both the first and the fourth pick, they are most likely taking a quarterback as well as another highly rated prospect. However, this brings up many different scenarios in how the first four picks would play out. With the Giants holding the second pick, there are multiple possibilities. First, and perhaps most likely, is that they pick Josh Rosen from UCLA as a replacement for Eli Manning. However, it is also possible that they replace Jason Pierre-Paul with pass-rusher Bradley Chubb out of NC State or taking one of the best running-back prospects in recent years in Saquon Barkley. With the third pick, the Jets would most likely take the third best QB in Josh Allen from Wyoming as it is unlikely for the Jets to trade up in the draft and select any other position. So with the fourth pick, the Browns have the liberty to select the best player available who can be any top prospect. My prediction are that the be the Browns will take Sam Darnold from USC; the Giants will take Josh Rosen; the Jets will take Josh Allen; and finally the Browns will take Saquon Barkley.

The final major story of this offseason includes the resurgences of Johnny Manziel and Colin Kaepernick. Manziel had a short stay with the Cleveland Browns after being picked during the first round. Released due to several off-field issues, Manziel hopes to receive a second chance from a new team. Different from Manziel, Kaepernick became unemployed due to his rather unpopular political stand in protesting the national anthem instead of his own fault. Even though many fans and analysts has compassion for Kaepernick as he endured unfair treatment due to his political stand, the coaches in the NFL don't quite share the same view. With no offers from teams, Kaepernick remains unemployed after nearly one year since his release from the 49ers last year.

Even though the offseason has just begun, many fascinating events have already taken place. The fates of many teams will change, as well as those of many players. The fans can't help but look forward to the next months.