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Farewell, Dr. Allen

Every morning of my junior year, Dr. Allen greeted me at the front door, cup of coffee in hand. With a radiant smile and a friendly hello, he held the HSPVA front door open for every single student. The day after a big poetry performance, Dr. Allen congratulated me with a small round of applause. And at 7:30 in the morning during the hardest year of high school, this act of kindness stuck with me — it made every day that much brighter.

Dr. Allen is truly the best principal that any art school student could ask for. His enthusiasm for the art that floats through the halls of 790 Austin Street is infectious. Anyone on campus last year will remember his cameo in *Mary Poppins* and his onstage appearance in a fluffy, pink tutu before the dance spotlight. Without exaggeration, I wouldn't be at this school without Dr. Allen. While principal, he created the Creative Writing department. And none of us would be downtown without him either, as he helped with the development of our new downtown location.

When I reached out to Dr. Allen about his time at PVA, he told me, "Serving as principal of PVA is an honor I could have never imagined. Being surrounded by young artists who are talented and passionate about their craft is unbelievably inspiring. Among my favorite things about my time at the school are attending performances in the different art areas, being a part of establishing the Creative Writing program, designing and being a part of the construction of the new downtown facility, and greeting students at the front doors each morning as my schedule allowed. I will always be most proud of the 790 Austin building!"

There's a whole lot to love about Dr. Allen, but my favorite thing about having him as my principal is that he truly cares about his students. After my senior show, as I walked through the hallway, completely exhausted, putting away props, he stopped me to congratulate me on a job well done. It's an Artist Academy rite of passage for Dr. Allen to shed a few tears as he addresses the newest class of HSPVA artists. When I volunteered at Artist Academy, the schedule even factored in Dr. Allen crying in his speech. How special is it that our principal, someone who could just sit back and relax in his fourth floor office with a stunning view of Downtown Houston, is also our biggest cheerleader? HSPVA may be undefeated in football since 1971, but if we had a team, I know that Dr. Allen would be in the bleachers for every single game.

When I asked Dr. Allen what his plans after HSPVA are, he said, "I have no other [plans] than enjoying coffee with my dogs (Charlie and Frankie) in the mornings, reading for pleasure, watching lots of Astros baseball, traveling with my partner, and

doing more work with students across the state with the UIL One Act Play competition... I walk away knowing that the past 12 1/2 years have been magical, fun, and full of memories that I will not forget!"

To be completely honest, a part of me is glad that Dr. Allen and I will be graduating from HSPVA the same year because I cannot imagine this school without him. I cannot imagine a year without a principal like Dr. Allen that advocates for all his students, remembers their names, and genuinely makes them excited to be at school. And for that reason, paper* bestows upon Dr. Allen that greatest honor we can think of: honorary member of the graduating class of 2021. And I, for one, cannot wait to walk across that stage alongside him.

by Shelby Edison



10 Things I Am Grateful for at PVA*

by Matthew Kalmans

As I conclude my high school journey here at Kinder HSPVA, I have been reflecting on these past four years quite often. Though there have been many ups and downs during my time here, tears shed and smiles spread, ultimately, I am so grateful to have come to HSPVA. Here are ten reasons (and certainly, there are many more) why I am grateful for my time at HSPVA.

1. The stray from normalcy. There have been many moments where I am invested in my art, sometimes to the point of extremity. Then, I remember that I wouldn't be able to have such freedom at any other high school in Houston. At HSPVA, we are given so much independence that differs from any other school, a quirkiness I am grateful for.

2. The administration. Our administration is the BEST. The amount of work that our APs and counselors put into our academic, artistic, and personal success is astounding. The administration truly cares about each individual student, and I will miss them dearly.

3. The facilities. It is an enormous privilege to have access to such high-quality performance spaces and equipment. Our Denney Theatre is on-par with professional performance theatres. We have so much equipment at our disposal to help us grow in our art and prepare us for the future. That is truly amazing.

4. Junior year. I know, who actually liked junior year? Well, I did. I found that I had the most academic and personal growth in this year (until March, of course), and I credit the teachers for a tremendous part of that growth. Though some of them are not still at HSPVA, I will never forget the impact that Ms. Seward had on my writing and rhetoric or Mrs. Garza's influence on my love for mathematics. The teachers here are the cream of the

crop.

5. The Theatre Department parents. Shoutout to Ms. Ramirez, Ms. Champion, Ms. Strug, and so many others for organizing such fantastic events in the midst of COVID. I am so grateful that I have gotten to become closer with my level, even in the middle of a pandemic.

6. Our consultants. We are so lucky to have working artists come teach classes for us. I have learned so much from our consultants' experience in the professional world and their perspectives on a career in the arts.

7. Being downtown. Our location has opened up so many opportunities for us. Whether it be walking to the Hobby Center to go see *Once On This Island* with ON STAGE SEATING, or walking over to Discovery Green for a dance rehearsal and ending the day with Starbucks, being downtown has opened so many doors for exploration.

8. *Mary Poppins*. This show was SO MUCH FUN! Being a part of an all-school musical was certainly an experience I will never forget. Seeing all art areas come together and form one beautiful masterpiece is absolutely incredible. No, even more than incredible... SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS!

9. The Theatre faculty. I am so lucky that I have gotten to know these teachers so well. They are the kindest people, and they are so much fun to be around. I will miss them so much.

10. Shelby Edison. A multi-talented, kind-hearted, hard-working icon. I am so glad we met in the parking garage across the street after parking next to each other day after day. I would not have wanted to run for cutest couple with anyone else.

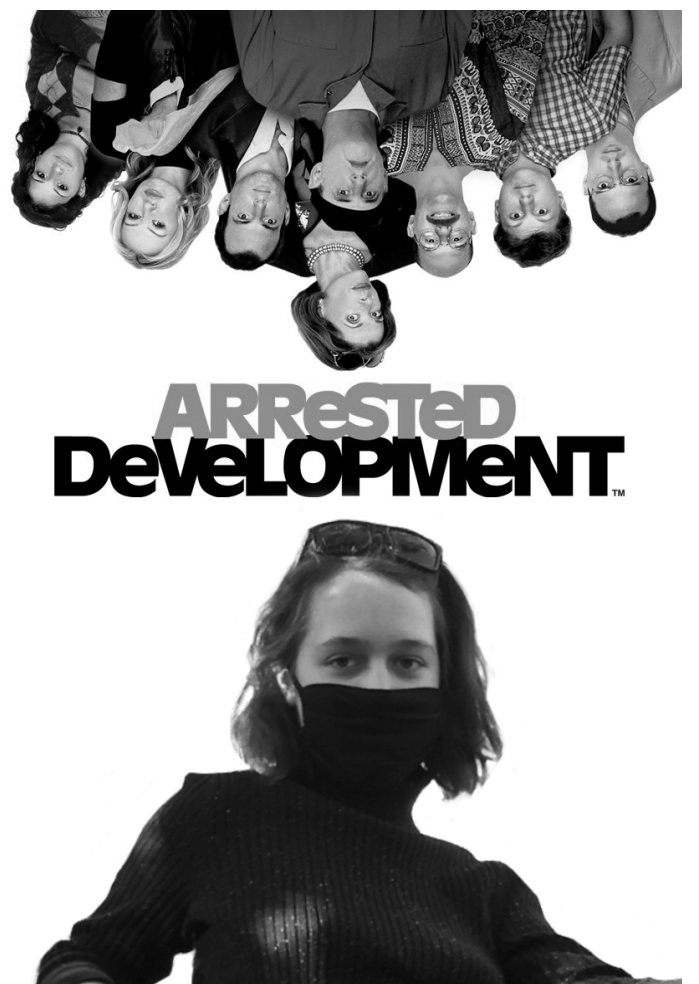
The Class of 2022's Arrested Development

by Vera Caldwell

As the class of '22 become rising seniors this summer, let's take a minute to reflect on what our cohort has been through. Next year, we will be the last class in the school to have attended the old campus. We only got to enjoy the new building for a little more than a year before being shut out of it due to COVID-19, which struck in the spring of our sophomore year. Now, we've spent our junior year divided between home and school. Some of us attend an almost-normal-but-not-quite campus with a few people conspicuously missing. Others of us stay at home watching our in-person classmates do school on Teams while our dogs bark and our parents loudly walk around in the background. All of us, however, have experienced some level of arrested development; we've only had about a year and a half of normal high school, and we're about to be seniors. I, for one, have noticed myself feeling as nervous as a freshman the few times I've had to go into school for the SAT or whatnot before crawling back into my virtual cave. We're cast adrift in the middle of this upheaval, with many of our memories fading further and further into the past as we spend more time in this dreamlike era. We've meticulously planned out what we would do if we could be real high school students—drive each other places (everywhere, all the time, like in the movies), have actual parties (imagine!!!), go to shows, go shopping—but we haven't actually done these things, at least not for the past year. The only side of high school we've fully experienced has been the homework-and-college-prep side, which is stressful and solitary—not the best thing for us right now. As more of us get vaccinated and switch to in person school, however, we can begin to counteract this problem. Call your friends up and ask them to go on a socially

distanced walk in a park, graveyard, cursed abandoned lot, etc. (anywhere outdoors). Eat outside at restaurants. Go to shops that require masks and social distancing. Have picnics! When was the last time you had a picnic? And if you can't see others in person, talk on the phone like it's the 20th century. Use that watch party feature

on various streaming services. Make plans over the summer. As a class, we need to live the few bits of life we feasibly can right now because time has passed way too quickly and, in one year, we'll be sent off into another new, strange situation before we've even wrapped our heads around this one.



*Honorable mention goes to Rebecca Rock

A Not-So-Normal Start to High School

by Kate-Yeonjae Jeong

I’m one of those people that likes to think way ahead. Sometimes, I might think too much about the future. In the past, I’d often anticipate what my high school experience would be like. However, even with all that overthinking, I’d never have imagined my start at PVA.

To put it simply, it was abnormal. I didn’t feel like a genuine high schooler, much less a real student. (I still feel like a middle schooler. Please tell me I’m not alone in this.) Microsoft Teams was a stark contrast to the atmosphere of a real-life classroom. In the first couple of months, I didn’t even know half the people in my grade. If I retained any familiarity, I only knew of them without actually knowing them.

As time went on, I grew into my daily habit of computer-ing and navigating the HUB — until I made the switch back into in-person learning. (I still use my laptop, and surfing the HUB remains the same, but still.) It was refreshing to actually talk with people, walk through the hallways lined with artwork, and communicate in open discussions. Strangely, being physically put into this environment made me feel like a student again.

This beginning into high school wasn’t a normal experience -- I mean, the circumstances alone weren’t typical at all, but I think that’s okay. It was certainly an

unusual year, but I feel confident that the next three years will be amazing at PVA. Not everything I imagine always sticks to reality, but with this, I think along with the weird can come upsides, no matter the situation. As they say, the future holds endless possibilities.



The Curse of the Class of 2021

by Rebecca Rock

Whispers surround the Class of 2021. From our freshman year onward, jokes of our “driving away” teachers have hovered near. Reports of our “terrible” behavior and over-attentiveness to our grades permeate the halls and threaten to slander our reputations. I decided answers were needed. Is the Class of 2021 the reason for so many teachers leaving?

How did you feel about the class of 2021?

Ms. Diaz: Some of the most **beautiful babies** in the world. From my boisterous and bubbly fifth period to my small and silly seventh period, you guys were **a blast**.

Ms. Seward: I **LOVED** them.

Ms. Manchac: Despite constantly comparing them to the Shocked Pikachu meme (which really is just teenagers in general), I think of them often and **miss working with them!** I hated that our time together had to end on Teams but **appreciated all of their pet pictures and bread baking tips!**

Ms. Tuttle: Y’all are great! **Fun, creative,** and so **invested in learning.**

Were we (class of 2021) the reason you left/are leaving HSPVA?

Ms. Diaz: **Never.**

Ms. Seward: Absolutely not — **I hated to leave them.**

KM: I’m quitting my job and selling my all my possessions to go travel for a couple of years. Maybe I’m having a midlife crisis or just fed up with Babylon, but it **doesn’t have anything to do with the Class of 2021** or 2022.

Ms. Manchac: **Absolutely not!** I left to pursue creative endeavors like writing curriculum for the district’s ethnic studies classes, something that I have wanted to do for YEARS!

Ms. Williams: **Don’t be silly.** You can’t scare me. And besides, I’ve had way worse than you guys.

Was fear for the class of 2022 the reason you left/are leaving HSPVA?

Ms. Diaz: No idea who those people are.

KM: Lol! PVA kids don’t scare me.

Ms. Manchac: The class of who? (I kid! I had not heard much about the sophomores so I can’t say that I had any reason to be afraid of them.)

Ms. Tuttle: Hahahaha. Also no.

What do you miss most about HSPVA?

Ms. Diaz: **The class of 2021**, and the boop-i-ty boop on the midtown campus because you could see everything and feel the heartbeat of the school.

Ms. Seward: The **marvelous students** and the arts permeating the campus.

KM: I’ll miss **the students** for sure. I don’t know anything about the Class of 2022 and their reputation, but I’ve also enjoyed teaching students who are a little feisty. My biggest complaint about the Class of 2021 is that they are too quiet and too well-behaved. Sometimes it’s like I’m teaching to an empty room. Thanks to COVID, sometimes I’m actually teaching to an empty room

Ms. Williams: Stanford Street! Halloween. The feeling of belonging to something really special.

Ms. Tuttle: Everything. **The students**, the staff, the art, the conversations. All of it.

The conclusion: Evident from the complementary and praising reviews of the Class of 2021 by our teachers, it is clear that the senior class is a well-loved portion of our institution. Our teachers mourn the loss of their favorite students when we advance grades and they leave HSPVA. Thus, the only reasonable conclusion is that it is not us who drives away the teachers. So who is the real culprit? The juniors (for the data may have been swayed by politeness)? The stairs? The world may never know.

*These interviews have been edited for length and clarity.

The Falcon and the Winter Soldier

By Irene Roddy

The Falcon and Winter Soldier had a lot riding on it when it premiered back in March. It was following the absolute smash hit that was *WandaVision*, and people were excited, myself included. Going into it, I was expecting something that made me think, something I wanted to uncover; a mystery, and to be honest, I feel as if I was let down. However, I did like the show. I thought the developing dynamic between Sam and Bucky was fun and made me realize they had more in common than I previously thought. The main plotline with Karli and the Flag Smashers reminded me of a “traditional” Marvel project, as opposed to the unnatural plotline *WandaVision* had, which I liked because I missed the classic Marvel experience.

There was a lot going on in *The Falcon and Winter Soldier*, one of my personal favorites was the new Captain America, John Walker. John Walker is such a complex character. He was able to go essentially full circle in 6 episodes, so you have to give credit to Wyatt Russell, who made him so unlikeable it was charming in a twisted way. There was also the return of Zemo, and with the introduction of more Super Soldier Serum, turned anti-villain. Zemo introduced us to Madripoor, which brought back Sharon Carter, AKA The Power Broker. The introduction to Madripoor is hopefully a more definite sign that Marvel is thinking about the X-Men, but there really isn’t any way to know.

Zemo was inevitably sent back to jail, this time to The Raft in episode 4 by the Wakandans, which raised a question for me. I don’t think Marvel can introduce or bring back such complex characters like John Walker, Zemo, and even Val Fontaine without expanding that further, so I think Thunderbolt Ross will make a reappearance, and maybe the forming of The Thunderbolts down the line.

All in all, going into the show, I was expecting Sam to be named Captain America, Bucky to be officially tied to the Avengers now that Steve is gone, some kind of clarity as to whether or not Steve Rogers is really dead, and a little nod towards a future project, like how *WandaVision* “set up” the new Dr. Strange film. Only one of these was really followed through, but it was a big one, and frankly the show itself was entertaining enough for me to give it 4 stars.

The Devil Wears Prada

by Will Newman

I will admit that while rewatching scenes from *The Devil Wears Prada* before beginning to write this review, I enjoyed some of the clips. They were certainly entertaining and had high energy. In fact, *The Devil Wears Prada* is by no means an awful movie. However, I feel like I am taking crazy pills when people tell me it’s a spectacular one.

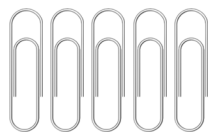
The Devil Wears Prada, as many movie-goers likely know, follows Andy (Anne Hathaway) as she finds herself landing an assistant job to Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep), the editor of a prestigious fashion magazine. The movie also features a side plot surrounding Andy and her boyfriend, Nate, who have the most forced romance ever put to screen. I’m sorry, but I don’t buy for a second that Andy would have ever dated Nate. Nate is passive aggressive and never supportive or understanding of Andy’s hard work unless it benefits himself. Nate is that guy who makes you hate group projects. Nate is the person who complains to the manager at a restaurant just so he may feel important. Nate probably idolized the rapper Vanilla Ice as a kid and listened to Ice Ice Baby unironically. Nate’s the type of guy to watch *The Lorax* and root for the guys cutting down trees. Nate probably has a Shia LaBeouf tattoo. Nate as a kid probably bullied other kids that watched the channel Boomerang on TV. Nate says his favorite movie is *Citizen Kane*, but we all know it’s *Wedding Crashers*. You get the picture.

An anomaly found in *The Devil Wears Prada* is how mundane it is while at the same time being a super

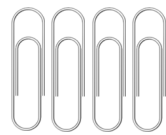
busy film. Andy is nervous about work; Emily Blunt’s character is constantly angry about work; Meryl Streep’s character is upset at Emily Blunt and Anne Hathaway for being nervous and angry about their work; Nate is angry that Andy is nervous about work (and angry about her working in general); Stanley Tucci’s character desperately wants to do the type of work that Meryl Streep is doing. Even though all of this is going on, I struggle to fully relate, sympathize, or invest myself in the characters and the plotlines surrounding them. *The Devil Wears Prada* feels like a movie made by and for people that have the flu. It’s the perfect sick day cable movie...I’m not sure if that’s a compliment, but I would take it (it’s the best remark you’ll get from me). I could totally see *The Devil Wears Prada* playing at 1:30 AM in between episodes of *The Big Bang Theory* on TBS.

I have more thoughts about *The Devil Wears Prada* that I won’t get into right now, and I will reaffirm that I don’t think it’s an awful film by any means. It’s just an interesting one. It’s fine and I look forward to watching it on TBS in the middle of the night sometime in the future.

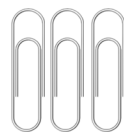
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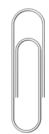
#Vaccinated Girl Summer



Reading the last Weekly Wrap email from Dr. Allen



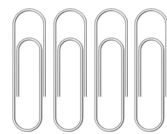
Finishing up AP test just in time for finals



Not graduating until mid-June



The New Wolf Alice Singles



By Vera Caldwell

Today's music is adjusted to the format of the social media post—it has to be snappy enough for the minute-long TikTok or the thirty-second-long Reels, with intros catchy enough that they stand out in the sea of Spotify playlists and recommendations. Our attention spans are shortening. However, the British rock band Wolf Alice has conspicuously resisted this turn towards short and snappy form, continuing to write songs that require a significant investment of thought and time. “The Last Man On Earth,” the first single promoting their upcoming album *Blue Weekend*, is four minutes long at a time when the average pop song is closer to two minutes. Its simple piano intro builds to an epic climax, but you have to wait awhile for it. Their second single, “Smile,” is shorter and heavier, but, as with many Wolf Alice songs, it takes a few listens to dissect its wall of sound into the component melodies. This investment is worth it for both songs, though. Details such as the vocal harmonies in “The Last Man On Earth” and the experimentation with different guitar melodies in the second verse of “Smile” stand out when you get to know the songs well. Googling the lyrics is also worthwhile. “The Last Man On Earth” discusses blind faith and egotism, describing a character who considers themselves exceptional and is waiting for divine recognition. To this person, every book has “lines between lines between lines/that you read about yourself.” The piano intro and vocal melody are very simple (perhaps too simple—this is my one gripe), so these lyrics stand out if you're willing to sit and listen to them. “Smile” is singer Ellie Rowsell's statement against those who see her as someone who can be pushed around or derided. Lyrics such as “your choice to call me cute has offended me” and “did you think I was a puppet on strings/wind her up and this honeybee stings” speak to the experience of anyone—well, especially any woman—who isn't content with others' condescending perceptions of them. Wolf Alice's songwriting about gender has always acknowledged the pain, anger, and longer-term psychological dynamics caused by sexism. The value of this honesty cannot be overstated. Wolf Alice have been artistically uncompromising without sacrificing their popularity, writing songs much the same as they always have. This may be a sign that they'll have lasting influence over the years to come, regardless of what new trends the tide brings in.

Fearless (Taylor's Version)

By Irene Roddy

On April 9, Taylor Swift re-released *Fearless (Taylor's Version)*. I was over the moon when she released the album for multiple reasons. Not only does Taylor now own her own music, but she included six new songs. SIX! I'm not going to run down the original tracks; we all know and love them (my personal favorite? “White Horse”), but I am going to talk about the vault tracks.

The first one released was “You All Over Me” ft. Maren Morris. It's angry and sad and completely directed at Joe Jonas, who broke up with Taylor in a 27 second voicemail back in 2008. To me, “You All Over Me” felt a lot like the opposite of 1989's, “Clean.” The song does feel repetitive at times, so it's not my favorite, but it is a solid 3.75 out of 5 stars.

Upon release, the second vault song instantly became a fan favorite: “Mr. Perfectly Fine.” “Mr. Perfectly Fine” was also angry, but it was less melancholy and more loud and upbeat. Fun fact: this song was ALSO directed at Joe Jonas, and Taylor sings the word “Mr.” 27 times, standing for the 27 seconds it took Joe to break up with her. “Mr. Perfectly Fine” tells a story; it shows Taylor being really sad and angry yet ready to move on at the beginning, and at the end she's saying goodbye and finally moving on. But let's be real, she wrote basically an entire album about him, so did she REALLY move on? Although this one isn't the most poetic of Taylor's songs, I still really like it and have to give it a 4 out of 5 stars.

“We Were Happy” is the third of Taylor's vault songs, and this one reminds me so vividly of Folklore. This song also tells the story of Taylor getting over Joe Jonas, how they were happy (duh lol), and the future they talked about having. This song is so relatable because whether you had a conversation with an ex-partner or yourself, the future almost never works out the way you want it to and this song attests to that. 4.5 out of 5 stars.

“That's When” gives off major *Speak Now* energy. This song, if more country pop, could fit into *Speak Now*, and it would make perfect sense to me. Frankly, I think that's why I like this song so much. It is super repetitive which got annoying, especially since it was back to the original country style, but I still enjoyed it. 3 out of 5 stars.

“Don't You.” The best of the vault songs. “Don't You” reminds me of both Evermore and 1989's “This Love”. It's intimate and relatable and poetic. This is simply the best song of the vault releases, and I'm so mad it didn't make the original cut. I LOVE “Don't You.” 5 out of 5 stars.

And finally, “Bye Bye Baby.” This is still my least favorite of the vault songs; it just feels too elementary for Taylor Swift. The verses are more poetic than the chorus which just messes with the whole flow of the song. It's also basically the same message as “Mr. Perfectly Fine,” which in my opinion is a better song. 3 out of 5 stars.



The (Somewhat) Unethical PVA Bucket List

by Pieper Grantham

As a senior nearing graduation, I have a lot of time to reflect on my time at HSPVA during my bouts of senioritis-induced procrastination. Did I live out my high school days to the fullest? Did I do everything there was to be done at PVA? The answer to both of those questions is no. Luckily for y’all, I’ve worked to compile a list of some of the seemingly must-dos at PVA. Of course, there will always be more to do at this school than can be contained on a list, especially when it comes to specific art-areas (such as in Creative Writing: “leave a fake rat in the living room”), but this list will hopefully get you started...or simultaneously start your list of “Things I will NOT be doing before graduation.” Here it is, The (Mostly) Unethical PVA Bucket list.

- ☐ Go to a performance from every department
- ☐ Hallwalk during class (don’t forget to stay for attendance — wouldn’t want to be counted absent!)
- ☐ Show up to a test, discussion, or project presentation completely unprepared
- ☐ Show up to a test, discussion, or project presentation and realize you worked way harder than literally everyone else in your class
- ☐ Perform in a Happening, preferably with an act different than your art area
- ☐ Take a bathroom mirror selfie, preferably during class or right before a performance you’re in
- ☐ Refer to one of your textbooks exclusively by the name of its author (De Blij, Strayer, etc.)
- ☐ Use the elevator when you’re not supposed to (and don’t get caught)
- ☐ Eat a bagel before a performance
- ☐ Drive the wrong way in the parking garage (no shame, the arrows are confusing)
- ☐ Stay after school for a rehearsal past 6:00 pm
- ☐ Take an AP class
- ☐ Drop out of an AP class
- ☐ Try to climb fully inside a locker (art area lockers included)
- ☐ Audition for an All-School Musical (even if you don’t make it in)
- ☐ Take a nap during both your art area classes and your academic
- ☐ Walk on the rafters in the Denney
- ☐ Start a club and don’t follow through with it
- ☐ Stand in the orchestra pit while it’s being raised or lowered
- ☐ Say “screw it, I’m dropping out” then continue to work hard on whatever assignment you were just doing
- ☐ Give unsolicited audition advice to a random middle schooler who mentions they want to go here
- ☐ [REDACTED] in the Blackbox
- ☐ [REDACTED] in the Practice Room
- ☐ Do a group costume on Halloween
- ☐ Graduate

10 Origami Sculptures You Can Fold Your Diploma Into in a Desperate Attempt to Avoid Confronting the Reality of Graduation

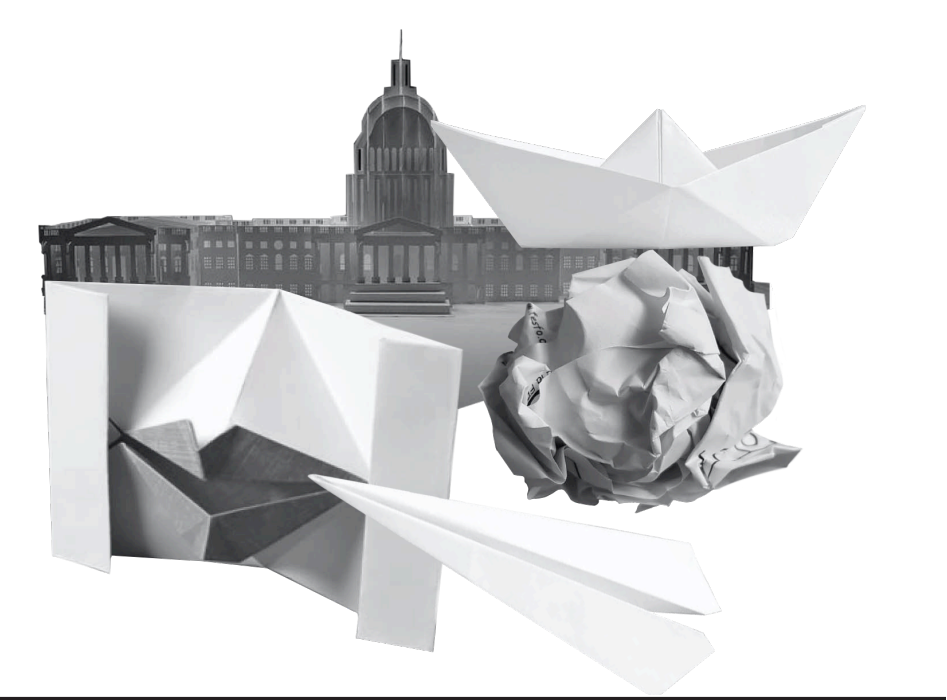
by Eli Johns-Krull

As graduation looms on the horizon, I (along with, I’m sure, a number of my fellow seniors) am feeling a growing sense of apprehension about what I’m supposed to do afterwards. What is left after the central goal I’ve spent the last twelve years working toward is done? Who will I be when I am no longer a student at HSPVA? What comes next?

Scary thoughts, right? They certainly freak me out, and when I’m feeling overwhelmed I like to make things to keep myself distracted from...everything, really. If you’re anything like me, this list of origami ideas to fold your diploma into should help give you something to do to take your mind off the impending existential crisis over what you’re supposed to do after high school:

- 1. A Tiger**, though you will never be able to capture the thousand-yard-stare of the one at the Aquarium.
- 2. A Pair of Lips, for when you find yourself desperately** missing seeing the lower half of people’s faces.
- 3. An Alien**, to celebrate the only thing missing from the apocalyptic nightmare of this past year.
- 4. A Paper Airplane**, so you can imagine what it must be like to fly out to visit a college.
- 5. A Corsage**, because if prom is fake this year, why can’t the flowers be too?
- 6. Sunglasses**. Use these to gain a better understanding of Covid deniers by seeing what it’s like to be blind to the world around you.

- 7. GameStop’s Logo**. Commemorate the glory that was rich people getting screwed over by a collective of Reddit-users.
- 8. A Boat**. Lodge it somewhere hard to remove and recreate the absolute chaos that was the breakdown of international trade.
- 9. The U.S. Capitol**. This one’s a little more involved, but afterwards you can symbolically set it on fire, because yeah, that also happened this year.
- 10. A Snowball**, to commemorate Ice-pocalypse and the pandemic’s total decimation of our energy and will-power.



An Open Letter to Whoever is Leaving Origami Cranes Around the School

You won't get away with this. Every day, I turn a corner only to find a meticulously folded paper crane in some nook or cranny of the school. It is delightful, gosh darn it. It is sweet and gives our school character. How dare you! How am I, an average PVA student, supposed to maintain peace of mind when I don't know who is planting these nice little birds? It is a simple act of kindness, and it will not go uncredited! Mark my words, I will find you. I am launching a widespread investigation as we speak. I will hunt you down. Leave no rock unturned. I will find you and give you the socially distanced version of a high-five you deserve if it is the last thing I do!

Sincerely,
Adelaide Fairbanks
a.k.a. The Crane Hunter

Why HISD Blocking Pinterest is a Travesty

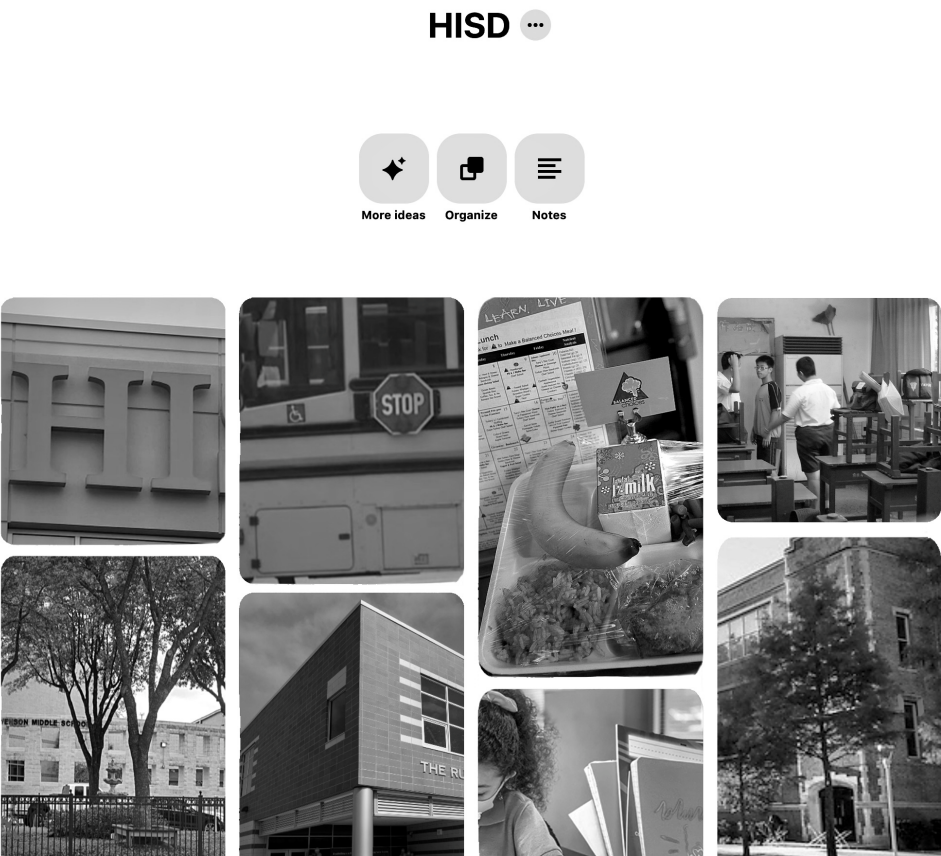
by Anna Grace Hethcox

Every PVA theatre designer knows where they were when the tragedy struck. No matter how many times one refreshed, only a blank white screen of empty sorrow emerged. Okay, maybe I'm being a bit dramatic, but there was a sense of frustration and confusion when me and my fellow *Pinterest* fanatics discovered that the district had blocked one of the most harmless social media sites on the internet. Even using the term "social media" feels like too much of a reach.

Pinterest, for those who don't know, is a site that allows you to collect and organize inspiring photos. It makes inspiration boards, references, and nice phone backgrounds easier than ever. I wouldn't say that there's a lot of discourse or connection on the app.

Pinterest has become an essential tool for all designers, as a way to present and share ideas and gather visuals to form cohesive designs. The main problem with the site being blocked on laptops is mostly regarding ease and comfort. Staring at a tiny phone screen for hours is obviously harmful on the eyes, not to mention, it's difficult to get the full details of a photo or share said photo with a group of people from a safe distance (which is essential now more than ever).

There's also an irony to the whole situation. Presumably, the district is protecting us from potentially inappropriate imagery on the site, which there very well may be. While this is understandable, something I can't grasp is why I can access *Wattpad*, one of the most infamously odd and potentially vile sites around, easily from the comfort of my PowerUp laptop. I suppose that's my main issue. The audacity. *Pintrerest* serves such an important role amongst me and my peers. So bring it back HISD, and block *Wattpad* while you're at it.



Un-Restrict my Senior Show Please

by Celeste Schmidt

Wednesday morning: I am checking up on the views of my senior show, as one does, only to find that my show, and the rest of the Creative Writing senior shows, are restricted on school laptops on school wifi. The Instrumental, Vocal, and Mariachi recitals were all available to watch. I'm glad these phenomenal shows are available to be enjoyed at the very school that held their performances, but why wasn't my senior show included in that? Isn't this the school's youtube channel? The show contained no inappropriate content or language.

Shortly after returning to campus last semester, I recall hearing an underclassman saying they didn't believe Creative Writing deserved its own department. At Artist Academy in 2017, Creative Writing's own Cathleen

Freedman read a piece for the incoming freshmen and was completely ignored and talked over. Our department is relatively small and already much less performance based than the other departments (with the exception of Visual); we don't have many performances to begin with, so what kind of message does that send to us when the few performances we put on are restricted? These shows are extremely important to our department!

I hope that it's not anti-Creative Writing sentiment on behalf of the school that has our videos blocked, because you love and appreciate us (right?). Maybe it's a preventive measure for any content that is believed to be in our shows, but even that issue could be remedied by just going and watching our shows. We'd appreciate the support.

Teacher Talk

By HSPVA Academic Faculty

For this edition of teacher talk, the academic teachers wanted to take some time to recognize those students who have made it a point to make this year the best it can be, despite the less than ideal circumstances. We want you to know that we see you, and thank you.

I see you, senior, who helps me tend my plants. The plants and I thank you.

I see you, freshman, who day after day continued to work through factoring with a smile on your masked face. Thank you.

I see you, senior, who is balancing so much and still makes the effort to help their classmate. Thank you.

I see you, junior, for always saying hello and goodbye to your classmates as you enter and leave class each day. Thank you.

I see you, senior, for always putting encouraging messages to your peers in the chats. Thank you.

I see you, sophomore, inching closer to the front of the class, raising your hand, and turning over a new leaf. I see it; keep it up!

I see you, senior, who trusts me enough to share their struggles and asks my advice. Thank you.

I see you, student, who asks how I am doing at the start of each of our classes. You have no idea how much that thoughtfulness means. Thank you.

I see you, senior, who has been accepted to the college of your dreams but still connects and helps others learn physics. Thank you.

I see you, student, who always turns on your camera without your teacher asking you to. We appreciate it; it's hard teaching to a screen with only circles and letters.

I don't see you but I see your work, your PearDecks, and your frequently raised hand on Teams. I wish I saw you—come say hi when there's a chance!

I see your high standards, never settling for anything less than a 100. I see your emails (maybe a bit too much... jk!) asking for extra work, and it's really nice.

I see you, senior, who always has THE BEST background on their Teams profile. Thank you for the smiles.

I see you, student, who I don't teach this year but still stops by to say hello from time to time and see how I am doing. Thank you.

I see you, biting your tongue when you know an answer but letting someone else take the answer instead. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

I see your stellar performances in your passions despite all obstacles and it's awe-inspiring. But um, can you also do that in your academics? :P

I see you, senior, who has the weight of the world on their shoulders and still shows up every day and tries to connect. Thank you.

I see you, senior, who always gives me new artists to play during our asynchronous time. Thank you for expanding my musical horizons.

I see you, Senior Capstone, who are patient through the tangents, technical difficulties, and horrible puns. Thank you.

I see you, student, who has not let the craziness of this whole year keep you down. Your energy and positivity you bring each day has kept us teachers going and we can not thank you enough.

I see you, student leaders, who have kept your club and organization alive this year so it may come back next year. Thank you.

I see you, staff of paper*, who have worked tirelessly to bring this unique part of PVA's culture to print every month. It is the one thing that connects us all regardless if we are in-person or virtual. Thank you.

A Tribute to KM

Another iconic PVA teacher is leaving this year. While Mr. KM, our amazing government and macroeconomics teacher and hallmark of paper* overheards, will not be at HSPVA next year, we wanted to cement his paper* legacy by spotlighting some of the best of KM's quotes.

America won't let me buy this truck. Why? Chickens.

Do not store your wealth in big macs.

America's national security is threatened by Korean washing machines.

Got some hot memes for you here today. Hope you enjoy.

Blockbuster died in the last recession. Good riddance. Natural selection.

If you had a bar of gold, throw it at someone's head and steal their stuff. (KM on how gold would help if the economy collapsed)


Luxembourg is a country, allegedly.

Which vaccine am I getting? Sam's Club

It wasn't a hunting accident or anything. He just woke up dead.

Lego Bat Man. Produced by Steve Mnuchin. Former Secretary of the Treasury.

I turned off student names because I'm about to roast some of your answers that are wrong.



I Can Mass Email You Whenever I Want: The True Weapon that is Microsoft Outlook

By Luca Jarosz

To put it simply, Microsoft Outlook is a weapon of mass destruction. I’m just going to call it what it is: **out of pocket**. The amount of carnage, massacres, and acts of war that have been dispatched over Outlook servers is in the hundreds. We can’t carry on like this.

How many times have we been blindsided as our parents have been informed of failing grades? Look, we all know a teacher whose weapon of choice is Microsoft Outlook. I can see how it could be somewhat concerning if I were to potentially have a “0” as my six weeks average 2 days before the grade cycle closes... in multiple classes, but an email to my parents is an act of aggression. Sometimes I find myself lying awake at night, spending more time worrying about an email home regarding missing grades than the missing grades themselves.

Besides the standoff between me and my assignments, I need to address the elephant in the room and the titular argument of this article: I can mass email anyone whenever I want. Whenever I get included in a mass email to the student body or senior class, I find my finger hovering over the “Reply All” button. There’s absolutely nothing stopping me from sending out my thoughts on the week to the entire student body.

Not to mention, even if I didn’t have an email to reply to, all I have to do is search for a name within HISD, and their email is mine. I’m not gonna lie: when I’m bored I often find myself searching for people from my past, just to check in on them and see if they’re still in the system. Maybe an old friend, a teacher who had an impact on me, or even a middle school crush. (Trust me, I have this email drafted, so do me a favor and never let me send it.)

It also doesn’t help that the security within HISD’s digital sector isn’t exactly top-notch. When you find someone’s email, you have their student ID number. So if you know their birthday, it’s all over. You’re just **in** their school email. You could even get into their Hub if you wanted to. (I’ve seen it happen and it sent chills down my spine.)

In conclusion, Ms. Dorothy Patel, please let HISD know they need to step up their cyber security. I mean, I’m not saying I’m going to mass email the school when I next feel like it, but it could very well happen. Actually, you know what? I’m going to. This isn’t a threat, it’s a warning. Watch out, PVA. Refresh your inbox.



The Fanciest Water Fountain You’ll Never Need

by Care Paden

My father works at a law firm whose offices are roughly a fifteen minute walk from PVA, so, on days when I need to work in an environment so mundane as to be totally undistracting, I’ll find myself there, tucked away in a spare office or empty conference room. This practice was put on hold for a while thanks to the pandemic, but now that I’m attending school in person, I’ve begun winding up in my dad’s office building once again—albeit with a few changes. For one, my dad and I are frequently the only people on his floor aside from the custodial staff; everyone else, for various reasons, is still working from home. There are lots of signs posted everywhere encouraging social distancing (between whom? I wonder); hand sanitizing stations whose nozzles are misadjusted, so they spray the hand sanitizer on the wall behind you instead of, you know, your hand; and last but certainly not least: Bevi, the touchless beverage station.

At least, the big selling point is that Bevi can *theoretically* be touchless. You have to, I kid you not, *scan a QR code with your phone* in order to dispense water into your water bottle for the Touchless Bevi Experience™. Otherwise, you pick one of five flavors including plain water (and flavor strength! And toggle between still and sparkling water!) on the built-in touchscreen, much like you would for those fancy fifty-soda Coca-Cola soda fountains you see in some restaurants. You have to hold down your chosen flavor’s icon for as long as you want the beverage dispenser to,

well, dispense your beverage. The break room drink fountains that Bevi replaced, with their low-calorie sodas (chosen, my dad tells me, because his is a floor full of dieters) and their crushed ice dispensers, were actually far more touchless than Bevi herself. All you had to do for the Good Old System was press your beverage container against the machine’s lever to dispense—your hand never actually touched the machine, just your favored liquid receptacle.

And to the other main selling point for the Bevi system—its eco-friendliness—those drink fountains *also* discouraged the use of single-use plastic bottles! Sure, their dispenser trays didn’t ambiently cycle through a rainbow of colored lights when not in use, but I also didn’t have to fumble with my phone for thirty seconds if I wanted a drink of water without using a public touchscreen. I don’t know if it’s COVID theatre, some misguided attempt at cutting down on single-use plastic water bottles that didn’t seem that prevalent to begin with, or just the need to flex on visitors to the office with a bougie water fountain, but my dad’s law firm has decided that they want to go down in history as enthusiastically endorsing what amounts to a thoroughly gentrified water bottle filler. It looks like she and I will have to deal with each other for the foreseeable future—though, if I ever turn into the kind of person who scans a QR code to get a drink of water, I’d like to ask that my friends immediately take me to a psychiatrist. Or a place with a normal water fountain, whichever comes first.

Zan’s Mixtapes: What Would’ve Played at Prom

by Zander Tate

In order to commemorate a horrendous senior year, here’s all the songs they would’ve played at prom.

“**Levitating**” by **Dua Lipa Ft. DaBaby** — This one needs no explanation. “Levitating” is the fun dance song that we have all needed after seemingly endless tragedies this year.

“**Leave the Door Open**” by **Silk Sonic** — Bruno Mars has been making party anthems for nearly a decade, but with the help of Anderson .Paak, he’s created a smooth and soulful song perfect for a slow dance.

“**No Hands**” by **Waka Flocka Flame Ft. Wale & Roscoe Dash** — If I had to pick a favorite party anthem, this would definitely be it. Though it’s a bit dated, this absolute banger will always get everyone out on the (virtual) dance floor.

“**Bidi Bidi Bom Bom**” by **Selena** — I really hope y’all know this one. A prom in Houston isn’t complete without some cumbia and the queen herself, Selena Quintanilla. Doesn’t this one just make ya wanna dance!

“**Come Get Her**” by **Rae Sremmurd** — Another song that’s guaranteed to get our Teams logos bouncing. Maybe this year we really can dance like a [REDACTED] since no one turns on their cameras.

“**Love Story**” by **Taylor Swift** — I know I always put Taylor on these, but with her recent release of Fearless (Taylor’s Version) and the resurgence in popularity of her older songs, I feel like this classic throwback is an essential sing along.

“**Kiss me More**” by **Doja Cat Ft. SZA** —With the rise

of TikTok, it seems like the new line dance is a TikTok dance? It may be weird to have people sit around until the 15 second clip that has a dance comes on, but this is still a fun song to get the people moving.

“**Ghost Town**” by **Kanye West** — Okay okay... I know this isn’t exactly a party song, but with its recent popularization on TikTok, I think it would be beautiful to scream “and nothing hurts anymore I feel kind of free” alongside a class of seniors that has endured the most.



Why *Booksmart* Should be Required Watching for All High Schoolers

by Shelby Edison

If you’ve had a conversation with me that’s lasted more than a few minutes, then there’s a good chance you’ve heard me talk about the best high-school movie of all time, *Booksmart*. *Booksmart* is, without exaggeration, a masterpiece. It also feels like a call-out post of my high school career. The movie features two best friends, Molly and Amy, who spent all of high school studying in order to get into prestigious colleges. But on the eve of their high school graduation, they realize that they missed out on the stereotypical high school social life and try to fit four years of parties into one night. So, why should this film be required watching?

First, this movie features one of my favorite lines ever said in a high school movie because, no joke, it changed my life. Our protagonist Molly, incredulous that a popular classmate got into Yale, says, “You don’t even care about school.” To which that Yale-bound popular girl responds, “No, I just don’t only care about school.” Then Molly proceeds to have a complete breakdown when she realizes all the people who had fun in high school are also going to Top 20 colleges.* Watching this scene, my head exploded, and I think I’m still picking up the pieces of grey matter off the floor. As a graduating senior, I can testify that the people who had a social life in high school are going to universities just as renowned as the people who, like me, spent all of high school studying. Besides being hilarious, *Booksmart* spits straight facts at a very niche audience.

This leads me to the fact that I’ve never felt more represented in a movie than in *Booksmart*. The character of Amy is who I aspire to be. Last weekend, I bought a sequin dress at a thrift store just because it looked like an outfit that Amy wears. Once a day, I say to myself, *I’m such an Amy*. *Booksmart* perfectly captures what it’s like to be a high school nerd in 2021. Yes, Molly and Amy are bookish. But they’re also loyal, hilarious, witty, and spiteful. I’m tired of seeing smart girls portrayed in movies as naive and innocent. Give me more of Molly who, despite being downright mean to a bunch of her classmates, is surprisingly popular and welcomed into a red solo cup party with applause. Give me more of Amy, pining after the cute skater girl but too nervous to make it through a conversation. (If you want to watch a movie featuring a young lesbian character whose character arc doesn’t revolve around homophobia, then *Booksmart* is for you.)

Finally, *Booksmart* is just a fun movie. I’m not saying it’s perfect, but it has a great cast of characters, a bomb soundtrack, relatable plot, and made me realize that high school is about more than just my GPA. So, freshmen, before you get thrown head first into the world of AP classes and building up that resume, do yourself a favor and ask your parental units for permission to watch *Booksmart* (it’s R-rated). And for those of you who have watched this masterpiece of a movie: if you want to recreate the Molly and Nick interpretative dance scene, please hit me up.

*I watch this scene about once a week. It’s just *that good*.

Why SNL is Good, Actually

by Tobi Carr

“SNL hasn’t been funny since Seth Meyers left.” “SNL hasn’t been funny since the 90s.” “SNL hasn’t been funny since the first few seasons.”

Even if you’re of the mind that the first or second one is true, you have to agree that the third one is just pretentious. And yet I’ve seen all of these opinions expressed, either in Twitter replies or Youtube comments or Reddit threads. But here’s the truth. While *SNL* has been suffering these past few years, *this* season—Season 46—is shaping up to be one of its best, right up there alongside seasons 32 and 25.

While I’m not a believer that ratings are the be-all and end-all, *SNL*’s current ratings are only helping my point. For the first time in its 46 year history, it’s been ranked as the number 1 comedy series in total viewers. That’s number 1 among *all* comedies, by the way, both broadcast and cable. I attribute many things to *SNL* hitting this major milestone.

1. After the pandemic that shall not be named cut short its previous season, I’m betting that many viewers tune in to see if *SNL*’s return to Studio 8H* will live up to the pre-pandemic episodes.

2. Alec Baldwin’s *horrendous* Trump impression has

finally been retired.

3. The amount of sheer talent on this show, both among the writing staff and the performers, is something that hasn’t been seen since the 2000s.

There’s Bowen Yang, who not only has written absolutely *amazing* sketches—including “The Actress” starring Emma Stone and “Sara Lee” starring Harry Styles—but also has made his mark as a performer with his impressions of Chen Biao and Fran Lebowitz. Ego Nwodim, who’s one of the most talented people *SNL* has to offer and has proved that with both her impressions of Dionne Warwick and Edith Puthie, her original character. Melissa Villaseñor might be one of the most talented impressionists in *SNL* history. Cecily Strong and Kenan Thompson can always carry a sketch. Hell, the cast & writers are so talented I can’t fit them all here.

Look. I’ll agree that these past few years have been hard on *SNL*. That Colin Hanks and Michael Che are no Amy Poehler and Tina Fey. But Season 46, with every episode so far being an 8/10 or higher, has just proved that *SNL* has the capability to be good again. And not only is it good again—it’s in a *golden* age.

Why SNL Sucks

by Vera Caldwell

Look, it doesn’t have to be this way. The *SNL* of the 2000s and the 1970s proved that. But honestly, most of recent *SNL*’s jokes don’t land. The “Hip-Hop Roundtable” sketch is a complaint about Gen Z but undercuts itself because the hip-hop traditionalists, who are supposed to be the straight men in the comedy dynamic, seem pretentious and clueless. They say “TikTok rappers” when they mean “Soundcloud rappers,” which wasn’t lost on any of Gen Z—the supposed butt of the joke. Alec Baldwin’s cartoonish portrayal of Trump fell flat because many people feared what the former president would do while in office too much to see the impression as funny. Many jokes fall back on celebrity (impersonations of them or cameos by them) to try to stay relevant to the zeitgeist. For instance, Anthony Dismukes is funny because...he looks like John Mulaney? The bar shouldn’t be that low.

The best comedy doesn’t insert itself into a cultural moment but regards that moment from the outside or detects a perennial truth. Roseanne Roseannadanna, Debbie Downer, and Stefon remain iconic because people like them have and will always exist. Borat Subsequent Moviefilm, which is far funnier than anything *SNL* has recently released, provides an outside look at America through the eyes of its Kazakhstani main characters. A typical American viewer would consider Borat’s bigotry foreign but then see it reflected, to darkly comedic effect, in their own country. Comedy about America, which has always been *SNL*’s mission, is impossible if you are too embedded in America to look at it objectively or see beyond the current trends. Instead of stepping back, *SNL* buries itself deeper in American culture and self-referential kitsch, thus failing to produce challenging work.

This isn’t even to mention that *SNL* produces both reactionary (“Don Pauly,” the “High School Theatre Show” series, “Woke Jeans”) and left-leaning (all of the presidential debates, “Welcome To Hell,” “5 Hour Empathy”) sketches. *SNL* may be willing to shift its core values so often because of writers who have vastly differing outlooks or because different political blocs and demographics are deemed lucrative for advertising depending on the week.

We don’t know what goes on in the writing room, but this inconsistency feels very dissonant. The laughter from the audience no matter the joke indicates that you, the viewer, should placidly fall into your place and enjoy the strange ideological hodgepodge that has been selected for you. This show aired both “Totinos” and “Don Pauly,” the former celebrates lesbianism while the latter’s straight man uses “queer” as a slur. Think about that. What are the show’s true ideals?

All of this, combined with the constant expansion of the cast and the laughter (THE LAUGHTER) whenever any actor so much as breathes, makes for a lackluster experience. The suckiest thing about *SNL* is that we know it can be better, but it stumbles along in mediocrity anyway.



*The studio *SNL* has been filmed in since its first ever episode

Ruth + Denney: PVA’s Worst, Best, and Only Advice Column*

*Dear R+D,
I am moving out of state for college, and I’m so worried about losing touch with my friends and feeling all alone in a far away city. Even during my normal summers I often struggled with reaching out and making plans with friends, and I ended up feeling like my summers were one long stretch of blah. How do I stay connected with wonderful people I’ve met these past four years? How do I make the most out of my last summer at home?*
—Pieper Grantham

Dear Pieper,
First, I want to reassure you that you’re not alone in feeling concerned about what life will look like once you’re on your own for the first time. Thankfully, as we’ve learned during this difficult year, many of our loved ones are only the push of a button away, and you can visit with each other when you’re all home for various breaks. Who knows? It’s more than likely you’ll make new, even closer friends while you’re away. If your friendship is worth the effort, you’ll put in the effort. If you grow apart, feel grateful for the time you had together and move forward the better for it. I wish you luck and many inside jokes to come.
Yours,
Ruth

Pieper,
It’s so important to remember that humans will always disappoint you in the end. Your grandma will forget to send money in your birthday card; your friends won’t comment three fire emojis under your latest Instagram post. You’ve spent upwards of 12 years around some of these people, so why on Earth would you want to spend any more time with them?! Don’t worry, I’ve already set up an itinerary for your totally not-bummer-summer, and spoiler alert, your silly out of state college is about to look a whole lot closer. 1) Procure a plane ticket to Iceland. 2) Once in Iceland, purchase a herd of sheep (the details of that step will be up to ewe). 3) Spend the rest of your natural life as a nomadic sheep herder whose only human contact is with the stray National Geographic team that thinks you’re just the coolest. This will be great for you, I already know you don’t get outside enough.
njóttu Islands,
Denney

*Dear Ruth + Denney,
This year was going to be our “screw it” year! We were going to audition for everything we could, carpe every diem, and instead... Well, senior year has still been our “screw it” year, but in a very different sense. More of a “screw it, why try?” than “screw it, let’s try anyway!” How do we get over our disappointment... and jealousy of the people who did manage to take senior year by storm?*
—Care Paden + Valentina Avellaneda

Oh Care + Valentina,
If this isn’t the most felt yet least talked about feeling at a performing and visual arts high school. This year was filled with chaos, zoom-fatigue, and re-kindling a social life. If what you had to do to make it to graduation was say “screw everything i have no motivation” so be it. There’s nothing wrong with binge watching Schitt’s Creek or getting a sweet: incorporating self-care and prioritizing your needs over desires are skills you’ll fully get the hang on later in life, but it’s worth starting now. Everyone’s life journey is different from your own. Rest assured that those people you’re jealous of are also humans with insecurities and may even be jealous

of how laidback your year has been! I know it’s hard not to compare yourselves to others, so admire their achievements, but don’t undermine your own. You both are insanely talented artists, and don’t need your names written on a playbill to prove it.
Yours,
Ruth

Care and Valentina,
I sympathize with you ladies for sure. What I think we all need is a redo on this year — a chance to relive these glory days and do right by them. If only there was some way to enjoy all the joy of being in a school performance without having to deal with... school. So, are y’all ready to vicariously live through your children that you force to be in all the performances you never auditioned for? Heck yeah! It’s time to bust out the baby ballet slippers and miniature violins and hit the stage... or at the bare minimum stand in the aisle and take like ten million photos. Procrastinate that PVA glory just like you procrastinate that English homework.
See y’all at the PTO meeting in 25 years,
Denney

DENNEY: Hey Ruthie... Do these letter writers seem oddly familiar to you?
RUTH: The names attached don’t ring any bells, but you’re right: I feel like I’ve seen this kind of writing before...
D: I’ve got it! These are the fools on the editing team that cut all my best advice!
R: Hmm, “best” is perhaps a bit generous. Wait, these people don’t work on the editorial staff — they work on this column!
D: So, you’re saying...they’re us? But we’re us.
R: Of course, we’re still us. These are just the students who have embodied us for the past two years!
D: And here I thought I was coming up with all those great puns on my own.
R: Anyways, it seems they’re letting us go. They’re going off to college in a few months, and we can’t go with them. We’re staying behind.
D: Oh, God, do we have to find new bozos to puppet?
I don’t think I can handle that. I have places to be! Cars to vandalize!
R: It looks that way. I’m sure whoever comes next will be just as wonderful as these three.
D: You’re the etiquette expert Ruthie, how should we say goodbye?
R: I think, in this instance, “good luck” will be a sufficient send-off. Not that they need it.

D: Yeah, my girl is definitely going places... probably various jails, but definitely places! Well Pieper, I think I’ve given you all the advice I can give. See you on the flip side. Or Hell, whichever comes first for us. Con-graduations, you’re finally out of this joint,
Denney

R: Farewell, Care and Valentina! These past two years, I’ve seen firsthand your tremendous abilities to help others—remember to devote some of that same attention to yourselves. Even advice columnists need to ask for help sometimes. I wish you all the luck in the world & your next adventures.
Yours,
Ruth

like usual, paper does not endorse any of Denney’s advice

And They're Off: The HSPVA Class of 2021

Shelby Edison	Washington University in St. Louis	English with a concentration in Creative Writing
Christine Rong	American University	Interdisciplinary Studies: CLEG
Maddie Strug	Kent State	Fashion Merchandising
Caroline Clark	Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins	Music Composition
Alexa Halim	Wellesley College	Data Science and Sociology
Maya Hansen	Santa Fe College	Psychology
Isabel Heinkenschloss	UCSD	Structural Engineering
Dionne Bracey	University of Oklahoma/UT	Modern Dance
Luca Jarosz	California Institute of the Arts	Acting
Abigail Baden	Southern Methodist University	BFA Dance Performance
Chloe Klitus	Louisiana State University	Psychology
Matthew Kalmans	Washington University in St. Louis	Mathematics
Alexandra Champion	Ithaca College	Acting
Tobias Rytting	Syracuse University	Musical Theater
Maya Hansen	Santa Fe College	Psychology
Ezri Greenberg	University of North Texas	Material Engineering
Pieper Grantham	New York University	Natural Science and Documentary Filmmaking
Alice Tian	Rice University	Bioengineering on a Pre-Med track
Levana Hoang	University of Southern California	Political Science (Pre-Law) and Dance
Trinity Mosier	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Music Education
Zander Tate	University of Southern California	Art, Technology, and the Business of Innovation
Sydney Ligon	The Ohio State University	Major in Dance, Minor in Business Management
Landy Chen	Cornell University	Hotel Administration
Jordan Ray	Texas A&M	Sociology
Abrielle Rangel	Indiana University	Vocal Performance and Political Science
Selena Ramos	Boston University	Computer Engineering
Jenna Kidd	SAIC	Fine/Studio Arts
Maggie Lytle	University of Houston	Music Education
Max Whittaker	Southern Methodist University	Music Composition
Valentina Avellaneda	UT Austin	Social Work
Celeste Schmidt	UTSA/UT Austin	Biology
Amanda Bloome	Emerson College	Media Arts Production
Nina Davalos	Wellesley College	Cinema and Media Studies
Anna Marie Tobin	Pace University	Directing
Noah Friedman	The Ohio State University	Operations Management
Asha Thekdi	University of Texas at Austin	Biology and Pre-Med
Dawsyn Williams	Sam Houston State University	Nursing
Eva Trakhtman	College of William and Mary	Biology on the Pre-Med Track
Olivia Syler	University of Houston	Journalism/Media Production
Micaylyn De La Fuente	Our Lady of the Lake University	Communication Sciences and Disorders
Ariel Workeneh	Rice University	Piano Performance
April Garza	Texas A&M University in Galveston	Marine Biology
Katherine Butler	Rice University	Violin Performance
Katherine Stewart	University of Houston	Chemistry
Maryfer Rodriguez	Northwestern University	Chemistry and Music
Sarah Grace Kimberly	University of Houston	BA in Trumpet Performance and Phronesis
Lily Tindel	UTSA to UT Austin (CAP program)	Psychology
Tatiana Jacksis	Fordham University	Biological Sciences
Lauren Patton	Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins	Oboe Performance and Forensic Science
Dawsyn Williams	UTSA	Nursing
Nathan Reedstrom	Stephen F Austin State University	Music - Sound Recording Technology
Joelle Rosales	University of Southern California	Information Technology and Dance
Alexa Williams	Southern Methodist University	Dance Performance and Political Science
Kael Juan	University Of Houston Architecture	Industrial Design
Ricky Kirk	Stevens Institute of Technology	Mechanical Engineering
Mason Brown	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	Bachelor in Fine Arts
Jordan Bush	Loyola University New Orleans	Jazz Music Performance
Garner Lazar-Pope	University of Michigan (STAMPS)	BFA/Library Sciences
Alissar Youssef	Syracuse University	BFA in Illustration
Micaylyn De La Fuente	Our Lady of the Lake University	Communication Sciences and Disorders
Raymah Shaikh	Parsons School of Design	Fine Arts
Eli Johns-Krull	Rice University	B.S. in Physics
Isaac Bremauntz	Northwestern University	History and Theatre
Gabriel Werline	Gap year	
Noah Friedman	The Ohio State University	Operations Management
Iggy Lines	Loyola New Orleans	Game Programming
Ivan Josic	UT Austin	
Sarah Klein	The New School Lang	Culture and Media
Anshita Lal	Penn State - University Park	Computer Science
Kenidee Wedlaw	George Mason University	Dance and Kinesiology
Elise Gentry	Howard University	Marketing and Communication

And They're Off: The HSPVA Class of 2021*

Grace Quarterman	Spelman College	Biology and Dance
Liberty Dante	Undecided	Visual Art
Ire Asojo	Brown and RISD Dual Degree	Painting and Africana studies
Sam Dill	Lawrence University	Vocal Performance
Ian Knight	Tufts University	Engineering Undecided
Alina Coulter	University of Dresden in Germany	Art Education
Melanie Regis	New England Conservatory	Voice Performance
Mary Balthazar	Undecided	Psychiatry/Psychology and Music Production
Charles Ables	Colorado State University	Enviornmental Economics
Morgan Manning	Point Park University	BFA in Modern Dance
Maribella Falconer	Texas Woman's University	Physical Therapy
Owen Talley	University of Louisville	Cello Performance
Jackson Guite	Tulane University	Chemistry
Alissar Youssef	Syracuse University	BFA in Illustration
Isaiah Davis	University of Houston	Education
Maja Neal	UTSA	Computer Science
Aanisah Johnson	LSU	Screen Arts
Jackson Guite	Tulane University	Chemistry
Jaylenn Holmes	Texas A&M University	Business
Maddy Vanlandingham	Rice University	Chemical Engineerng
Camara White	Lawrence University	Music Education
Melanie Hernandez	Texas A&M	Biology
Anna Pearce	Colorado School of Mines	Environmental Engineering
Dawsyn Williams	UTSA	Nursing
Emily Chapin	Loyola University New Orleans	Mathematics with a Pre-Med track
Levy Cao	University of Texas at Austin	Studio Art
Caroline Paden	Reed College	English with an emphasis in Creative Writing
McKenna Leach	UNCSA	Scene Design/Themed Entertainment
Henry Johnston	Belmont University	Commercial Music and Music Technology
Blair Reeves	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	Studio Art
Rebecca Rock	Amherst College	Law, Jurisprudence, and Social Thought
Isias Workeneh	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Chemical Engineering
Max Whittaker	Southern Methodist University	Music Composition
Prince Frazier	UMass Lowell	Composition for New Media
Iggy Lines	Loyola University New Orleans	Game Programming
Charlotte Stallings	University of Michigan	Theatre Design and Production
Amanda Quinonez	UT Austin	International Relations and Global Affairs
Joshua Garvin	Syracuse University	BA Jazz & Contemporary Music and Marketing
Jaylenn Holmes	Texas A&M University	Business
Bela Ramirez	Fordham University at Lincoln Center	International Studies and Economics
Everett Adkins	Rice University	Statistics
Gabe Barron	London College of Fashion	Fashion Design
Seth McCabe	DePaul University	Cyber-Physical Systems Engineering and Film
Savannah Heximer	Eastman School of Music	Vocal Performance
Christina Jones	Southern Methodist University	Dance and Health & Society
Ámbar Caldwell	Sarah Lawrence College	Politial Science and Theatre Arts
Jordan Sheldon	University of Southern California	Communications
Emma Arriaga	University of Houston Downtown	Criminal Justice (Pre-Law)
Marwan Ghonima	University of the Pacific	Jazz Studies
Ellie Drotts	Point Park University	Jazz Dance and Special Education
Connor Loftin	University of Colorado Boulder	Economics
Lawrence Turner	Florida State University	Music Education and Sports Journalism
Philip Hulten	Texas State University	Education
Amira Diaw	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	Fine Arts Studio
Estuardo Gonzales	Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins	Cello Performance
Maya Chorn	Parsons School of Design	Fine Arts
Lily Peters	University of Houston	Hotel and Restaurant Management
Deja Bracey	University of Oklahoma/Texas State	BFA in Acting

Congrats Class of 2021!

In high school, you survived a hurricane, moving buildings, five flights of stairs every morning, a global pandemic, virtual learning, muted Teams calls and poor connection, and an ice apocalypse.

If you could take on this *~interesting~* high school experience, you can take on anything!

*Some members of the class of 2021 didn't respond to our survey, so unfortunately, we couldn't brag about them :(

Senior Superlatives: paper* Edition

- Shelby Edison**— Most Likely to be Type A++
- Rebecca Rock**— Most Likely to Write A Memoir Made of paper* Overheards
- Luca Jarosz**— Mr. paper*
- Ylliana Larsen**— Most Likely to Start a Bird Sanctuary
- Matthew Kalmans**— Most Likely to Join the Jellicle Cats
- Zander Tate**— Most Likely to be a Property Brother
- Maja Neal**— Most Likely to Write Fortunes for a Fortune Cookie Company
- Julian Cotom**— Most Likely to Play the Bass at his Own Funeral

Care Paden— Most Likely to Give Advice to D&D Characters

Valentina Avellaneda— Most Likely to Own a Starbucks Franchise

Pieper Grantham — Most Likely to Accidentally Start a Cult

Jordan Sheldon — Most Likely to Put on a One-Man Show of the Torah



Senior Confessions

paper* asked the seniors graduating this year to anonymously submit their juiciest confessions about their time at HSPVA. Here are some of the funniest, most shocking, and sweetest confessions (that we could publish).

One time a teacher walked in on me.....
“hanging out” with another student.

I haven’t read a single book for English class since freshman year.

I’ve had a crush on at least five of the other people in my art area.

I dated a jazz kid.
Worst decision of my life.

The last day of freshman year, the doors to the roof were unlocked and another classmate and I snuck onto the roof.

I like to compliment the freshman and sophomores on their clothes because they always seem so happy a cool senior likes their fit.

I stole an orange from the PTO.

For one of my paper* reviews, I didn’t watch the movie and still rated it terribly. Sometimes you just know that a movie sucks.

Horoscopes

by Maja Neal

Parting is such sweet sorrow. It has been my pleasure to be your astrology girl for the past year, but now we’re almost at the end. My last pieces of wisdom for you: brush your teeth, do your math homework, and eat more cake (it’s good for you).

Aries — Good news for your heart! Unconditional love presents itself in all types of ways this month. Whether it’s friends, family, or a partner, accept the love that comes to you. You know better than anyone that you deserve it. Advice: don’t bet on losing dogs.

Taurus — Happy early or belated birthday, Taureans! For you is a practice that this Taurus has been following lately: keep an eye on your wallet. It’s exciting to have good things and material possessions come to you, but self-control is important! Advice: learn kazoo solos for your band.

Gemini — A rush of luck might convince you for a second that nothing is wrong, but never neglect your work because other aspects of your life might be going well. Remember to work in the long-term. Advice: do something that would scandalize your grandma.

Cancer — Have you found yourself wishing for a past time? That can be dangerous because you can miss things that are right in front of you. Eyes up — you’ll thank yourself. Advice: look both ways before crossing the street. Genuinely.

Leo — I know you’re dying to see friends like everything is back to normal — but it’s not. Be safe! And, if the safest option is staying home, take that as good alone time to take care of and look within yourself. Advice: make cornstarch blood and stage a murder scene.

Virgo — You might start feeling lonely, like you haven’t found your crowd. Remember that there are people who care about you and even more people who think you’re rad. Also, don’t underestimate the Internet for getting into communities. But (Advice:) NOT Omegle.

Libra — What are you holding on to — relationships, habits, ideas — that’s not good for you? It can be really difficult to let go of these things if they’ve been with you for a long time. But I have faith you can do it. Advice: find a new appreciation for toadstools.

Scorpio — How do you react to good, new things coming into your life? Do you measure them against old grudges or tell yourself you don’t deserve them? Letting go of past experiences will help you open up to people again. Advice: draw a shrimp. Draw a lot of shrimps. Who’s stopping you.

Sagittarius — You might be feeling beat down like tragedy just keeps coming your way month after month. But, as cliché as it is to say, things have to go downhill before they can go uphill. Don’t lose your hope for this month. Advice: make your blankets into a nest and be comfy.

Capricorn — There are a lot of things happening in your life at once — it can overwhelm you. So try not to overextend yourself, and let your friends know that you’re recharging, not isolating. Advice: cure all of your ailments with some suspicious herbs.

Aquarius — Your head might have been a little floaty the past few months. But there are places where you can be safe and confide in other people about your troubles, so use them. Advice: write more things down; I know you forget them.

Pisces — You’re good at being there for other people — make sure you support your friends and loved ones this month. Don’t burn yourself out, of course, but being a good friend in a time of need could be extremely important to another person. Advice: support your local record store.



A Final Letter from the Editor

Dear paper*,
Freshman year, walking through the checkered halls back on Stanford Street, I saw a sign advertising paper*. I thought to myself *there’s no way I will be valedictorian. Instead, I want to be editor-in-chief of paper**. Flash forward a few years, and here I am editing the final issue of this year’s paper*. That’s pretty surreal. You know what else is surreal? Making a school newspaper during a pandemic. This year, we didn’t pass out physical newspapers at lunch. We didn’t have chaotic meetings in the library. Heck, the first group photo of all the editors was taken in April! This year paper*, like the rest of school, was digital (and a bit disjointed). Nonetheless, we accomplished some pretty amazing things. We released two summer issues, covered events from an election to an attempted-coup to an ice apocalypse, and over-utilized the raise hand feature on Microsoft Teams. That’s how resilient our little newspaper is! We did that! So, thank you a million times to our writers because despite my emails yelling at y’all to turn your articles in, I will be eternally thankful that you logged onto meetings and wrote your heart out when you could’ve just taken a nap. Thank you to our readers, students and staff, for entertaining our wild articles ideas. Thank you to Mr. Turner for supporting this volume of paper* every step of the way. And finally, thank you to Rebecca, Luca, and Ylliana. Words cannot describe how much I loved brainstorming the next David Hulten-esque column with you (to Luca), our frantic FaceTime calls editing articles at the last minute (to Rebecca), and shouting out the zaniest ideas and seeing them come to life in graphics that were out of this world (to Ylliana). To the PVA underclassmen, paper* is now in your hands. Don’t let it die! At the end of the day, paper* is probably the most fun way you can pad your resume. It’s also my favorite PVA tradition, and I will miss it (and reading all the Overheards you submit to hspvapaper@gmail.com) so insanely much.
Sincerely,
Shelby Edison

Overheard@PVA

I'm preparing these children for real life: **nepotism**.
— Shelby Edison

Orlando Bloom is part of the *same Buddhist organization* that I'm a part of.
— April Garza

If Nic Lam was a girl, he'd be a **#girlboss**.
— Matthew Fu

Just because I drove on the wrong side of the road doesn't mean I'm a *bad driver*. — Katie Butler

If you want to understand America, read *The Scarlet Letter* and listen to **Britney Spears**.
— Mr. Inocêncio

Callum, I think I know what you need to do to fix your *emotional constipation*. You need to write some poetry.
— Pieper Grantham

This snake needs **exfoliation**.
— Charlotte Stallings

Freshmen, the juniors are in charge of you; they are *benevolent dictators*.
— Ms. Chase

And Jesus said "Thou computer is thy **pathway to god**." — Ben Authur

I put the Barbie dolls I don't like *in the freezer*.
— Seva Raman

I eat like an *actual child*. I eat dirt.
— Marla Gallardo

Emphasize da **cannibalism**.
— Eva Trakhtman

I could never fire you Ms. Chase, you **ARE** the Social Studies Department.
— Mr. Tellez

I think it's just exhausting *being happy*. — Lily Peters

Rainforest Cafe angers me. — Will Newman

Let your kids *play with knives!* — Mr. Landry

I'm sorry, I thought **I was still God**. — Elijah Kennedy

Would Mary Shelley have been an *anti-vaxxer*? — Care Paden

Noah Alapat: What gender is your dog?
Maika Nebgen: **Fat**

PVA? That *sounds like an STD*.
— Jeremy Jordan*

I don't know why humans want to separate themselves from the material world. **I love materials**. — Liza Stickney

All I'm saying is Seth Meyers could not have eased the tensions between China and the Soviet Union after the Cold War but **Richard Nixon** could have written the 2019 comedy special *Lobby Baby*.
— Nina Fowler

Do you prefer to do anything illegal **pertaining to scones**.
— Bekah Ortiz

Cosine of 0 is 1. Or 0. Or both. Or neither. It's *whatever you want it to be*. — Ty Deigaard

I actually got sleep today, I **highly recommend** it. — Dr. Smith

I took a 20 minute nap earlier today and I had a dream I was at a funeral and did **the stanky leg** in front of the memorial.
— Sylvia Zhao

I don't know how much sense that made, but *it happened*.
— Lauren Sternenberg

Please stop mixing your sports metaphors. You obviously don't know what you're talking about. — Eli Johns-Krull

paper*
Staff

Editor-in-Chief: Shelby Edison

Mangaging Editors: Luca Jarosz and Rebecca Rock

Media Extraordinaire: Ylliana Larsen

Contributing Writers: Valentina Avellaneda, Vera Caldwell, Tobi Carr, Addie Fairbanks, Pieper Grantham, Anna Grace Hethcox, Kate-Yeonjae Jeong, Eli Johns-Krull, Matthew Kalmans, Maja Neal, Will Newman, Care Paden, Irene Roddy, Celeste Schmidt, Zander Tate, and the HSPVA Academic Faculty

Emotional Support: Matthew Kalmans and Bela Ramirez

*Yes, *that* Jeremy Jordan