

City increases budget by \$30 million



New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker’s plan for the city includes adding 34 city jobs while cutting the property tax rate after a property valuation that saw residents’ tax bills skyrocket. /Yash Roy, Staff Photographer

BY YASH ROY
STAFF REPORTER

Amid historic staffing shortages and concerns about increases in taxes, New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker projected confidence while presenting the city’s \$665 million budget.

Elicker’s budget proposal for the fiscal year 2023-24, which he announced on Wednesday at City Hall, includes plans to

lower the city’s property tax rate by roughly 6 percent, add 34 city jobs, increase New Haven Public Schools funding by \$8 million, increase up-front contributions to pensions, add 12 positions to the New Haven Police Department and create an Office for Policy and Management.

“I believe this budget strikes the right balance between providing the critical services that our residents expect and deserve while also keeping our residents’ tax bur-

den down and ensuring the financial health of our city,” Elicker told the News.

The lower property tax rate does not necessarily mean that all residents will pay lower taxes: last year’s property revaluation saw property values spike across the city, and even with a lower mill rate, residents could still have a higher tax bill next year.

Wednesday’s budget announcement was vastly different from Elicker’s 2021 budget address where he laid out two separate budgets, including a crisis budget which proposed cutting services and raising taxes. Amid a pandemic, unmitigated debt obligations and underfunded pensions, New Haven was “on the precipice of collapse in 2021” according to Elicker.

Elicker said that “smart fiscal decisions” over the last two years, which include the stabilization of pension funding and an increase in the state’s contribution to the city through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program reimbursing municipalities in the state for non-taxable property, have contributed to the city’s “strong position” today.

“We had a \$66 million gap in the budget in 2021,” Elicker told the News. “It’s been a really, really challenging three years. But when you think about where we’ve come, how far we’ve come, it is quite remarkable. It’s in part because of our team but it is also in large part because of the partnership and leadership of our state delegation and the many people on the ground, encouraging and pushing, you know, the university to contribute more to the city.”

State Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney and New Haven activists, including members of New Haven Rising and UNITE-HERE, have spent much of the last two years advocating both in Hartford

SEE BUDGET PAGE 5

Yalies advance to “Jeopardy!” semifinals

Sattler and Miner’s episodes aired Monday and Tuesday respectively

BY MOLLY REINMANN
STAFF REPORTER

Those who frequent the New Haven bar scene have probably seen Claire Sattler ’23 or Lucas Miner ’24 dominating weekly trivia nights. Now, the two have brought their skills to television, as they head to the semi-finals of the “Jeopardy! High School Reunion Tournament.”

Sattler and Miner previously competed in the Jeopardy! Teen Tournament, coming in first and second place, respectively. Late last year, they — along with 25 of their competitors from the Teen Tournament — were invited to take the “Jeopardy!” stage again and compete in the



The students, who first competed on the show’s Teen Tournament, have both advanced to the semi finals of this week’s High School Reunion Tournament / Courtesy of Lucas Miner

SEE “JEOPARDY!” PAGE 5

Uni. Council to advise on free expression

BY WILLIAM PORAYOUW
STAFF REPORTER

The University Council, Yale’s highest presidential advisory body, will be in talks at the end of March with University President Peter Salovey over the status of free expression on campus.

Salovey told the News that the Council, which was established in 1947 as the only general volunteer leadership advisory body appointed by the Yale Corporation, will be asked to share their insight on the “free exchange of ideas” at Yale. The 30 members of the body, which includes General Motors chief economist Elaine Buckberg ’89 and U.S. congressional representative Sheila Jackson Lee ’72, are to provide ideas on how to improve free inquiry at Yale, according to Salovey. The Council will also produce recommendations on how to foster “productive, open conversations” across campus.

“We’ll be promoting a culture on campus in which all points of view are welcome,” Salovey said in an interview with the News.

While the Council has influence over administrative decisions, Salovey told the News that not every piece of advice they offer is able to be implemented — however, he added that the University administration has “tried a

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Two charged for drive-by shooting

BY YASH ROY & NATHANIEL ROSENBERG
STAFF REPORTERS

Two individuals were arrested on Monday following the shooting that sent ten New Haven schools into lockdown Monday morning.

The individuals were leaving Newhall Street in Hamden when they were arrested by New Haven Police in connection to the shots fired between two cars that occurred near Science Hill on Monday morning. Police have also recovered four firearms, one of which has been linked to the shooting.

The shootings prompted lockdowns at schools across the city, potentially due to a miscommunication between police dispatch and the Board of Education security’s team, leading the BOE to believe that an active shooter was inside a New Haven school.

“Through investigative efforts by NHPD’s shooting task force and criminal intelligence units working with state and Hamden Police, we determined that the persons responsible may have fled to a house on Newhall St. in Hamden which police have identified as a known location for criminal activity,” New Haven Police Chief Karl Jacobson said at a press conference on Tuesday.

Both individuals, one a 19-year old from New Haven and the other an 18-year old from Bridgeport, have been charged with criminal possession of a firearm, possessing weapons in a motor vehicle, pistol without a permit, high-capacity magazines and larceny of a motor vehicle.

The department has recovered 23 casings around the area of the shooting. They also obtained a search warrant to search the Newhall St. house and obtained two

SEE DRIVE-BY PAGE 5

Former Yale president dies at 99

BY WILLIAM PORAYOUW & SARAH COOK
STAFF REPORTERS

Howard R. Lamar GRD ’51, former dean, University president and Sterling professor of history at Yale, died on Wednesday at the age of 99.

Lamar, who served as University president from 1992 to 1993, as well as dean of Yale College from 1979 to 1985, began his career at Yale as a professor of “History of the American West” — a year-long lecture class that he taught for nearly four decades. Lamar also served as chair of the history department and wrote several books, including “The New Reader’s Encyclopedia of the American West.” His legacy at Yale will continue under the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders.

George Miles ’74 GRD ’77, former curator of the West Americana collection at the Beinecke, first met Lamar as a senior undergraduate at Yale. After Miles graduated, Lamar served as his advisor and suggested he apply for the Beinecke curatorial position — a job Miles never considered before Lamar’s suggestion and ended up working at for 41 years.

“He was an extraordinarily transformative influence on my life,” Miles said “I’m not unique in that there are dozens and dozens of people across the country who would tell you a similar story.”

Among those people is Jay Gitlin ’71 MUS ’74 GRD ’82, who continued to take classes with Lamar as a graduate student at Yale School of Music after taking his signature lecture course as an undergraduate. Lamar later served as Gitlin’s mentor when he got his PhD in history at Yale.

Gitlin described Lamar’s personality as “utterly genial,” remembering his sense of humor and beaming smile, as well as his ability to bring people together. This “knack for creating a sense of family,” according to Gitlin, may be attributed to his upbringing in the South. Lamar grew up in rural Alabama and attended Emory University.

“He saw people,” Gitlin said. “He saw people because there was a sense of closeness and because he understood what we all have in common, so I think he was able to cross barriers in ways that others weren’t.”

As Miles has gotten older, he said he has come to appreciate the remarkable quality of Lamar’s “generosity of spirit” more and more.

SEE LAMAR PAGE 4

CROSS CAMPUS

THIS DAY IN YALE HISTORY, 1975. Several people, posing as college students and law enforcement officials, confront students in at least six different incidents, attempting to obtain marijuana.

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THROUGH THE LENS



Giri Viswanathan
Photography Editor

The Magic of DPop

Davenport Pops Orchestra at Woolsey Hall, 2/25/2023



OPINION

Reading the room

The first book-to-movie adaptation I remember seeing is “Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief.” My then-best friend and I begged our parents to take us to see it in theaters almost immediately after it came out in 2010, only to be sorely disappointed.

It wasn’t that it was an awful movie (although author Rick Riordan did bash the script before the movie came out and 13 years later, I’m not inclined to defend it), it just wasn’t what I was expecting. I wanted my favorite characters to come to life and instead, I got teenagers who felt like strangers and way too many CGI action scenes. Since then, I’ve held my breath when my favorite books have hit the big screen, going so far as to avoid watching altogether until the details of the book are only a hazy memory. Internet discourse about adaptations abounds. Many posit that they’d pay a premium to see a painstakingly accurate adaptation of their favorite books, but those people don’t know what they’re asking for. Books and movies are different mediums with different strengths and weaknesses. A good adaptation isn’t one that replicates its source material, a good adaptation captures the spirit of reading the book so well that one can ignore the inconsistencies.

Adaptation is a difficult task. According to Mark Feeney, Pulitzer prize winning arts writer and critic, “The very qualities that make for a great work of fiction — voice, sensibility style — simply do not translate into film.”

Movies can visually convey dramatic irony in a way that books can’t, bringing “show, don’t tell” to a whole other level. But as a result of being a visual medium, they also have material constraints — financial and otherwise — that books don’t. For example, a story in which a journalist writes an article about 17 novelty coffee shops is easy to describe in a book but having to individually rent or create these different cafes would probably be unjustifiably expensive.

In adaptation, writers and producers should play to the medium’s strengths. In fact, some changes can even make the movie better than the source material. The “Wizard of Oz,” “The Shining” and “The Godfather” are all classic movies which are quite different from the books they’re adapted from which have surpassed their bookish counterparts in terms of commercial success and arguably, storytelling.

In “Crazy Rich Asians,” the iconic mahjong scene in which Rachel confronts her boyfriend’s mom (Michelle Yeoh) is nowhere to be found in the book. According to Vox, it was added in part because Michelle Yeoh refused to play the stereotypical tiger mom character from the book, but it’s also an emotive visual scene full of subtext which would not have worked as well in print.

To be sure, movie adapters can take it too far. The details that are changed can sanitize the original work or bring us backwards in terms of representation. Sometimes, BIPOC, disabled and/or fat

characters in books might be cast as white, non-disabled and/or thin. In doing so, studios are erasing an important part of those characters’ identities and depriving audiences of representation of marginalized groups. In “Holes” (an otherwise pretty solid adaptation of a novel by Louis Sachar), the main character, Stanley Yelnats, who is described in the book as being fat, was played by a thin actor. Writers have a responsibility when wielding the biggest platforms they have, and nine times out of 10, many more people will see the two hour movie (or at least the commercial) than will pick up a 300 page novel.

A GOOD ADAPTATION CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF READING THE BOOK SO WELL THAT ONE CAN IGNORE THE INCONSISTENCIES.

But what if instead of seeing adaptations as literal translation, we saw them as opportunities for transformation, allowing our favorite stories to grow and change with us? Adaptations also have the benefit of coming after the source material, and depending on the timing, the writers might have knowledge of societal shifts and other changes the author didn’t know about. Recently, my family went to see “A Man Called Otto” which stars Tom Hanks as the curmudgeonly titular character from the source, originally Swedish, novel, “A Man Called Ove.” I love Backman’s prose, and the book is genuinely a good read, but some elements of “A Man Called Ove” have not aged well. Some of the characters are homophobic, and certain elements of the story don’t land in the same way that they would have when the first came out over a decade ago.

A gay character in the book is trans in the movie. The film’s producers changed details such as brands and even names (including the main character’s) so that they would resonate with an American audience. But as I sat in the theater with my family, I realized that the movie evoked the feeling of reading Backman. Even if it wasn’t to the letter of the book, it allowed me to share the experience of the story with my family, who probably wouldn’t have encountered it otherwise. That’s what good adaptations do, they help stories find a new audience while also satisfying the readers that loved them in the first place.

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YALE DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL BOARD

Students are stakeholders

The recent Yale College Council referendum has raised the quintessential question of who has the right to have a voice in deciding the direction of Yale’s future. The Editorial Board concurs that, as stated in the YCC’s Feb. 6 letter to the Board of Trustees, “the connection between [the Board] and members of the Yale community has dissolved.”

The Editorial Board is calling upon Yale Corporation to bring back the petitioning process for alumni interested in running for a position on the Board of Trustees of Yale Corporation. On top of that, we believe that students should be allowed to participate in the petitioning process by being able to support the efforts of alumni to be on the ballot for the Board of Trustees. In this way students will be able to influence whose issues are discussed on Yale Corporation’s Board of Trustees. That said, promises are often forgotten without ways to hold elected officials accountable.

In order to increase accountability for these elected board members, who serve six-year terms, the Editorial board is calling on the Yale Corporation to release meeting minutes after three years in order for stakeholders such as students and alumni to be able to hold them accountable for their campaign promises. Increased transparency could then be capitalized on by allowing for increased contact between the YCC, the student body and the Yale Corporation Board of Trustees.

It is only with increased enfranchisement, transparency and accessibility that we will be able to ensure that the Yale Corporation holds true to Yale’s mission and works towards the improvement of the “world today and for future generations”.

A feasible solution to the questions raised by the YCC’s referendum would be to allow both current students and alumni to be involved in the Corporation’s nomination process. This can be accomplished by reinstating the petitioning process for the six elected alumni on the Board of Trustees and allowing students to participate by supporting candidates for the Board.

NO DEAL OF POWER THAT GREAT SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE EXERCISED WITHOUT A DEGREE OF OVERSIGHT IN THE FORM OF PUBLIC OPINION.

The ability for students to both nominate potential Board members as well as sign petitions for running members would address the issue of the lack of student representation. This way, current students could have a direct impact on Yale Corporation’s ballot. Having an active stake in who is able to run for trustee positions would allow students to highlight the issues they want covered.

The main concern the Yale Corporation had about the petitioning process was that it would be dominated by “petitioners who are materially supported by organizations that seek to advance specific platforms.” The board argues that trustees “have a duty of loyalty to the institution, which precludes them from placing their own interests or those of outside groups above those of the organization.” We agree that pre-commitment to a particular campaign platform would create a conflict in this regard, but we believe the board’s solution — banning petition candidacy outright — stifles the voices of Yale graduates to choose their own candidates, which they have been doing since 1872.

If the Board is concerned with conflicts of interest Yale Corporation could revise its Miscellaneous Regulations to ban candidates from receiving campaign funding from outside sources and to submit a sworn statement that they have not made any campaign promises to constituents that would conflict with their fiduciary responsibilities and, if elected, pledge to serve on the Yale Corporation with an open mind.

The Editorial Board also recommends that the Yale Corporation revise its standard for the release of its minutes.

As it stands, the Yale Corporation releases its minutes 50 years after their creation, decades after the trustees have left their roles and well after the timeframe in which they can be held accountable for their decisions. This leaves the trustees in a position of incredibly unchecked power — each member of the Corporation can make decisions that affect the lives of future and current Yale students, faculty and staff without having to worry about being challenged or criticized for their choices during their term.

Moreso, by virtue of the Yale Corporation’s ability to direct the investment of Yale’s \$42 billion endowment, the Corporation has the power to influence global environmental, financial and political institutions. Given any and all of the Corporation’s actions should be in the interest of Yale University and its mission, none of its choices — no matter how wide-reaching — should warrant secrecy. Further, none of the Corporation’s decisions should be free from scrutiny. The Corporation wields considerable power over Yale’s image, investments and function in society, and no deal of power that great should be allowed to be exercised without a degree of oversight in the form of public opinion.

Understanding the importance of transparency, the Editorial Board recommends that the meeting minutes of the Yale Corporation be published three years after their creation. This puts the publishing date halfway through a trustee’s term, allowing said trustee to be held responsible for relevant statements, votes, decisions or actions while still serving on the Corporation. While one might argue that the introduction of public opinion may sway trustees’ ability to do what is best for the University, the argument must also be made that a lack of accountability allows trustees to go unscathed and unchecked if they make decisions that are not in the best interest or in line with the majority beliefs of the individuals who make up the University.

In accordance with increased transparency there needs to be a forum for students to express their concerns to the Board of Trustees. With that in mind, the Editorial Board calls for the Yale Corporation trustees to hold one meeting with YCC leadership and one public town hall open to all students for every Yale Corporation meeting that occurs during the academic year.

There is a fundamental disconnect in the discrepancy between the corporation website’s statement that “trustees meet regularly with members of student government” and the Yale College Council’s long-standing allotment of a single, hour-long annual meeting between the student body president and trustees. A one-hour annual meeting with YCC leadership cannot capture all of the undergraduate student body’s concerns. Students deserve accessible public forums where they can express their opinions on the business the Yale Corporation is considering in that meeting.

As it currently stands, members of the Yale community are given three options to contact the trustees: send a written letter to a P.O. Box, submit a message on the corporation’s website or submit a form to request an in-person meeting. According to its webpage, all messages sent in through the first form

are read by the senior trustee and made available to all trustees, but there is minimal assurance, nor any written protocol in the corporation’s bylaws and regulations, that any external input provided is carefully considered by all trustees. Public forums like these would hold them accountable to listening to student input. The Editorial Board believes that this increased contact with students would be incredibly beneficial for students and Corporation members alike, encouraging more dialogue and understanding between the parties.

Additionally, we call for meeting agendas to be published and made accessible to students before every meeting. This is quintessential to the success of the public forums because it will allow students to directly speak on relevant decisions the Board plans to make.

IF YALE IS TRULY “FOR HUMANITY,” THEN YALE CORPORATION MUST LISTEN TO STUDENTS AND ALUMNI IN ORDER TO CHAMPION THE YALE NAME TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD, FOR TODAY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

We believe that publicizing the Board’s agenda prior to each meeting is critical to ensuring that Yale Corporation’s stakeholders — students, faculty and professors included — are appropriately granted opportunities to voice perspectives on the issues at the table. It is a simple, undemanding ask that binds the Board of Trustees only to the reception of input, not to any undue obligation to adhere to the demands of a constituency.

When meeting agendas are withheld, students are limited in knowing which type of suggestions/concerns are relevant when communicating with the board. This would streamline student engagement efficiently and guarantee that all stakeholders are engaged in the issues being discussed. We believe that more regular, robust and transparent lines of communication between the Yale Corporation and the broader community are imperative to supporting the stewardship of the University.

As it currently stands the Yale Corporation has minimal connections with students and is unable to be transparent in their actions because of the disconnect between them and the Yale Community.

From academic freedom to how Yale’s \$42 billion dollar endowment is spent, the governance of Yale Corporation is profoundly impactful beyond the University community itself. The Editorial Board believes that the Yale Corporation can improve upon fulfilling their obligation to their stakeholders by returning the right to petition to alumni and involve students in the nomination process, release their meeting minutes after three years to increase accountability and hold regular meetings with YCC leadership as well as public town halls for each of their Board meetings. If Yale is truly “For Humanity,” then Yale Corporation must listen to students and alumni in order to champion the Yale name towards a better world, for today and future generations.

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FROM THE FRONT

Howard Lamar, former president of Yale, dies at 99

LAMAR FROM PAGE 1

“He had a warmth of personality that made everyone around him want to be their best self,” Miles said.

Stephen Pitti ’91, professor of American studies and history and director of the Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders, serves as yet another example of Lamar’s impact, having met Lamar for the first time in his lecture course in the first semester of his sophomore year.

Pitti wrote to the News that although he was shy at the time, he found the courage to introduce himself to Lamar, who then invited him to visit his office hours.

“Speaking with him changed my life,” Pitti told the News. “I had never met such an encouraging professor, and I decided after our meeting to take every class he offered over the next two years. I did that, and he also advised my senior essay and helped me apply to graduate school. Over the last 30 years he shaped my understanding of what good teaching, scholarship, and advising should look like.”

Johnny Faragher GRD ’77, former Howard R. Lamar Professor of History and director of the Lamar Center, also remembered Lamar’s warm presence.

Faragher first approached Lamar as he was walking across the courtyard in Morse College, where his office was located. Even though Lamar was on his way somewhere else, he invited the then-graduate student into his office to sit and chat.

“He was very approachable,” Faragher said. “Very human in a place where people could pull rank easily, particularly senior professors. He was very approachable and welcoming.”

History of the American West

As a graduate student at Yale, Miles said Lamar asked his advisor Ralph Gabriel what to write his dissertation about. “Raised in the South, educated in the East, go West young man!” Gabriel told him.

This advice, as it turns out, guided Lamar’s study of the American West, which Gitlin described as having transformed the public understanding of American history.

“Lamar has forced us to see the American West in comparative perspective and to view the frontier not simply as the birthplace of one nation but as a shifting space

contested by a variety of nations, empires, and peoples,” Gitlin wrote in a biography of Lamar. “Because he has dared to tell the story of frontier expansion with all its warts and scars, Lamar has given us a West that is more relevant than ever.”

According to Ned Blackhawk, the Howard R. Lamar professor of American studies and history, Lamar’s vision of the American West included Indigenous and non-Anglophone populations, especially in the Southwest, and he imparted a vision of western history that — like the West as a whole — was “multi-racial, contested and deeply political.” Lamar’s students included several who would become founding figures in the “New Western History” of the early 1990s, Blackhawk added.

“Lamar’s classes, students and works prioritized Native history in ways that brought heightened attention and ultimately institutional commitments to Native American history and Native American and Indigenous Studies,” Blackhawk told the News.

Both Miles and Gitlin, who took Lamar’s hallmark class “The History of the American West,” described it as not only popular among students, but also as one of the most comprehensive courses on American history at the time.

The class began with the study of indigenous communities in North America, then went through transnational migrations that shaped the continent. Miles said that if you took both semesters of the full-year lecture course, you would cover the entire history of America up until just 15 years before the class was being taught. Miles said the class was ahead of its time, studying Indigenous history in the 1970s long before Native American studies became a program on college campuses.

“There are aspects of the past that we need to understand that are topics that maybe have been neglected for a variety of reasons,” Miles said. “But Howard was really interested in trying to find the spots that we needed to know more about from very early on.”

As a professor, Lamar liked to sprinkle puns throughout his lectures, Miles said, adding that Lamar might have known they were bad but told them regardless.

“He had an impish delight in jokes and in the humorous side of life,”

Miles said. “It was always fun to be with Howard.”

Miles and Gitlin both described Howard as someone deeply committed to all of his students, even teaching a section himself when his class size exceeded the available number of teaching assistants. He instilled confidence in students, with Gitlin telling the News that after meeting with him, one would immediately feel “buoyed up.”

“He was wonderfully supportive, while at the same time, sort of gently and wisely, critical,” Miles said. “I think he understood people’s strengths, sometimes sooner than they did.”

Lamar’s leadership

After serving as a faculty member and chair of the history department, Lamar became dean of Yale College in 1979 and later president of the University in 1992. Lamar took over as president during a time of turmoil, according to Gitlin, serving as a “transition president” who brought a sense of calm and confidence through his deep sense of community.

Lamar took over as president following the high-profile resignations of former president Benno Schmidt Jr. in 1992, as well as dean of Yale College Donald Kagan and University provost Frank M. Turner. Schmidt and his leadership peers had been confronted with a faculty revolt, budget slashes and failing infrastructure on campus.

Miles said Lamar never spoke harshly of Yale but remained focused on moving the University forward, working to develop the cultural centers and reform the tenure system.

“Without rooting against the institution, and in fact, always being proud of the institution, Howard never ever hesitated to think something needed to get better,” Miles told the News.

In Lamar’s role as president from 1992 to 1993, Faragher remembered him as a “consensus candidate,” getting along with everyone but remaining assertive.

Lamar was also deeply interested in Yale’s relationship with New Haven, known to bring together people from both the Yale and New Haven communities over meetings at Mory’s. He served as an alderman and chairman of the New Haven Board of Overseers.

This investment in New Haven is also evident, Gitlin and Miles said, in how Lamar helped start



Lamar, who is remembered by his colleagues as a “capacious thinker,” created a new understanding of American history through his study of the American West. / Courtesy of Jay Gitlin

the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute in 1978 to provide resources and opportunities for Connecticut teachers.

“He held you accountable, but always with that charm,” Faragher recalled. “That was the thing. Very few people can pull that off. He could pull that off.”

Lamar is survived by his daughter, Sarah Lamar ’88, her husband Scott Gress, three grandsons, Geoffrey, Thomas and Peter Gress, his nieces Mary Jane Lamar and Katie Lamar Jackson, as well as Penny and Pym Buitenhuis and Paul Buitenhuis. nization tries to do something that might take away from the profits of the insurance company, “they step up and throw millions [...] of dollars into the lobbyism” to block the efforts — which she believes happened again this time.

Michel said there was insufficient support even in the Human Services Committee.

“The chairs let it pass the last time, and it was sent to appropriations with a fiscal bill that really was out of proportion,” Michel said. “And it was just sent to be killed in another committee.”

Michel and other progressive legislators plan to continue fighting for universal healthcare coverage in the State. He told the News that the cause needs more public support and advocacy — especially from students — pushing the

Committee to raise the bill in the next legislative session.

“The study really doesn’t cost much money — it costs less than \$20,000,” Michel said. “We need a lot of pressure so that this committee accepts to do [it].”

Hughes believes that other states look to Connecticut as an example and that piloting universal health-care coverage in the state could be scaled up for larger populations in other states or even perhaps the nation. She emphasized that most Connecticut families who aren’t insured by HUSKY or Medicare have had “horrible, lengthy, soul-crushing experiences with their insurers if they have anybody sick.”

“This system is ridiculous,” Hughes said. “It is normalized. And it is not a care system. It is a profit system that is preying on sick people. And I think that younger people and a lot of families are starting to wake up to this and say this is not acceptable ... why have we not questioned that the barriers to care have only gotten greater?”

As of June 2021, there was \$88 billion in medical debt on national consumer credit records, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

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University Council to advise Salovey on status of free expression at Yale

EXPRESSION FROM PAGE 1

lot of things that they’ve recommended.” Previously, the Council has worked on a variety of campus issues, from improving sustainability at Yale to increasing workplace diversity.

Criticism from conservative leaders

The convening of the Council comes amid a string of accusations of the suppression of free speech made against the University by conservative leaders both on and off campus.

Two conservative federal judges made national headlines last October after they declared that they would no longer hire Yale Law graduates for clerkships positions due to what they believed was a lack of free expression on campus. The judges cited last year’s campus protests against speaker Kristen Waggoner for her connections to an anti-LGBTQ+ group, as well as student criticism over the administrative reaction to a 2021 email by a Yale Law student that used racially insensitive language.

In 2021, the University quietly added Pilar Montalvo to its Office of the Secretary and Vice President for University Life, where her role included a focus on issues of free expression on campus. The following year, Nina Fattore was asked to join Montalvo as a main point of contact for administrative support during campus rallies or protests.

“We can and will continue to expand our efforts to make the university’s free expression policies and procedures more widely known,” Montalvo wrote in an email to the News. “And that is in fact one of our office’s areas of focus.”

During last semester’s Buckley Program event featuring Mark Pompeo, Montalvo was in atten-

dance to ensure that the talk ran smoothly, and ordered the removal of several non-Yale protestors who disrupted Pompeo’s talk. According to Montalvo, she regularly works with student groups and schools that are concerned about their events “running smoothly” in terms of safety and freedom of expression.

Montalvo did not directly answer an inquiry over whether she believes there is a threat to free expression at Yale.

“I think a lot of protests against speakers are viewed as cancel culture, whatever that means,” AJ Tapia-Wylie ’26 said. “I don’t think rightfully so. I think they’re students exercising their free speech, again something that they disagree with, that which I think again [as] I said is a healthy dynamic.”

Intellectual diversity at Yale

Yale affiliates skew liberal. During the 2022 midterms, the News reported that FEC and SEEC filings show that Yale and Yale-New Haven Health employees donated a total of about \$1.6 million to Democratic and liberal causes. A 2017 survey by the Yale Daily News found that only 7 percent of faculty members identified as conservatives, while approximately 75 percent considered themselves liberal.

Members of the Yale community are not all convinced that these demographic splits have limited free expression in the classroom. Tapia-Wylie and Edward Blunt ’26 told the News that, regardless of their political affiliations, they both feel as though their professors have been respectful and welcoming of people’s backgrounds and beliefs.

“I’ve only had a handful of classes so far, but I’ve had no issue in terms of my professors being too conservative [or] too left wing,” Blunt said. “So I don’t think it’s an issue in terms of teaching.”

Blunt added that it is important to have ideological diversity, because people on different ends of the political spectrum “perceive problems differently.”

Lauren Noble ’11, who serves as executive director of the conservative-leaning Buckley Program, told the News that she believes that Yale is lacking in intellectual diversity.

“If all faculty share the same perspectives and students and faculty alike self-censor perspectives outside the campus orthodoxy, then even when ideas are flawed, there will be no one to challenge them,” Noble said.

Professor of psychiatry Wexler told the News that he believes that both conservative and liberal viewpoints are “strongly represented on campus.” He suggested that backlash over a lack of representation of certain viewpoints comes from whether those viewpoints are perceived to be treated with respect by the campus community.

“I don’t try to engage with spaces that won’t respect what I have to say or respect my identity, because I don’t think that’s constructive,” Tapia-Wylie said.

Since the Woodward Report

Sterling Professor of Theater Joseph Roach told the News that he recommends for the University Council to support the principles of intellectual freedom set forth by the Woodward report of 1974, which was approved by former Yale president President Kingman Brewster Jr.

Henry Chauncey Jr. ’57, who served as a University administrator under Brewster, explained that the former Yale president assembled a committee to create a free speech policy following several tense free speech crises in the 1970s. The report that was submitted, Chauncey told the News, said that free speech must be allowed in its entirety, even if the

speech was deemed to make members of the University uncomfortable.

“If you believe the goal of a university is to seek the truth and disseminate it through teaching and publication, then you have to say that anyone in the university can say anything they want,” Chauncey said.

The Woodward report has become the guiding principle for free speech at Yale ever since. But maintaining its philosophy becomes tricky when taking into account Salovey’s push to promote a socially comfortable environment for students, Chauncey said. Chauncey explained that the idea behind this push to accommodate members of the University community that might feel uncomfortable with certain ideas remains in conflict with the idea behind free speech.

Noble told the News that Yale plays a unique role in promoting free expression.

“Yale produces many of the nation’s leaders, in Congress, the courtroom, and the board room,” Noble wrote in an email to the News. “They’ll be responsible for taking into account the perspectives of a wide variety of individuals, not just those who share their world view. If Yale wants to maintain its reputation as a place where leaders are formed, it needs to shape students who can handle disagreement with civility and respect.”

The Woodward report was issued in December 1974, spread in the future, so becoming well-versed with the technology now can give students a leg up.

Psychology professor Hedy Kober, while optimistic, expressed concerns about potential challenges to academic integrity.

“As a first step, we will need to all think about more creative solutions for papers and take home assignments so that students need to rely on their own thinking, argument, synthesizing and writing skills rather

than on ChatGPT’s skills,” psychology professor Hedy Kober told the News. “I know others are working on tools that would be able to detect AI-generated text, so that might be the new ‘Turnitin’ tool we can use to avoid AI-plagiarism.”

Computer science professor Jay Limsaid that ChatGPT is “definitely” a teaching concern of his.

He called ChatGPT a “double-edged sword” for its ability to enhance or detract from students’ learning. He also pointed out that ChatGPT, while usually correct, is sometimes wrong, which greatly hinders its utility for students seeking quick-and-dirty answers.

Nevertheless, Lim said that “we need to embrace technology” because there is no way to prevent students from using ChatGPT. Rather, Lim thinks that faculty members should focus their efforts on integrating ChatGPT into their courses to help students rather than harm them.

English professor Kim Shirkhani, who is also the ENGL 120 course director, said that while she hopes students would want to do their own writing, there are also effective ways to mitigate the risks of academic dishonesty.

“The AI does a good job of summarizing ideas and even generating parts of argument, but doesn’t yet create the kind of nuanced, alive, implicative writing we teach in 120,” Shirkhani told the News. “We also have a few bulwarks — in the drafting and workshopping aspects of the course, which help establish early on a given student’s writing characteristics.”

ChatGPT uses 175 billion language parameters, making it one of the largest and most powerful AI language models ever.

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FROM THE FRONT

Elicker announces \$30 million increase in city budget

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and in New Haven for the state to increase its contribution to the city. Their advocacy led to the almost-doubling of PILOT from \$41 million to \$90 million in 2021, which combined with Yale increasing its voluntary contribution by roughly \$10 million in 2022 and 2023 to help stabilize the city's finances. Moreover, the city has received roughly \$100 million in federal COVID-19 relief funding from the American Rescue Plan, which must be spent over the next five years. The city's tax revenue and investments have also increased, allowing for a stronger fiscal position.

"Many people are investing in New Haven, which has helped and will help build our tax base," Aldermanic Finance Chair Adam Marchand told the News. "The challenge is to make sure those investments will benefit a broad swath of our community, particularly those neighborhoods most in need of resources."

This year's PILOT contribution will decrease slightly due to the city decreasing its mill rate. However, the city is projecting an increase in Education Cost Sharing funding from the state, as well as additional funding from Yale.

Last year's property tax revaluation, which saw the city's combined assessed value of properties increase by 32.5 percent, will also lead to a projected \$25 million increase in tax revenue.

Elicker's 2022 budget proposal included a plan to phase in property tax increases over five years, but the Board of Alders agreed to a two-year phase-in in June of 2022. That means that residents will feel the full impact of the

increase in property valuation in July of this year.

Additionally, Elicker's 2023 budget proposal includes a measure to lower the mill rate from 39.75 to 37.20. A mill is equal to \$1 of tax for each \$1,000 of assessment. Calculating property tax requires multiplying the property assessment by the mill rate and then dividing by 1,000. According to Elicker, the rate decrease hopes to soften the burden from the property tax revaluation.

According to information provided by city spokesperson Lenny Speiller, the average one-family home in New Haven can expect to see a \$500 tax increase under the FY24 budget, while two-family and three-family homes will see an increase on average of \$851 and \$934 respectively.

On top of the reval change, the city is planning on increasing its up-front contributions to pensions by \$2.3 million annually, adding up a total pension contribution from the city of \$83 million per year. The city also plans on placing a cap on capital borrowing at \$55 million. According to Elicker, this is the lowest level of borrowing the city has projected in recent memory.

Wednesday's budget proposal also includes plans to raise salaries for city employees and to add 34 positions to city government.

These positions include 12 new positions in the New Haven Police Department, including a new lieutenant, three sergeants, three detectives, one crime analyst and two animal control officers. The city's park departments also plan to add seven new park caretaker positions.

"New staffing positions are some of the most scrutinized portions of the debate over the budget so I'm

looking to hear from the Mayor and department heads about these positions and their necessity," Marchand told the News.

While the city hopes to add these 34 new positions, more than 100 city positions lay vacant, according to numbers released at the Board of Alder's most recent finance committee meeting.

Mayoral candidate Shafiq Abdussabur criticized Elicker's plans to increase the number of staff positions in the city without filling the 112 positions which currently lay empty.

"We don't need to grow the government ... the city has been hemorrhaging new hires over the past three years," Abdussabur told the News. "There is a claim that New Haven can't attract people because the pay is too low. There is no question that the current cost of living and quality of life creates a burden, [but] the issue here isn't about just salaries and career paths, it's about leadership and that starts at the top."

Abdussabur added that "unsettled union contracts" have left current unionized employees "unsure about their financial futures causing more instability in the city."

Elicker told the News that he is working with unions to solidify contracts and hopes that the salary increases in the budget — which will bring parity between what New Haven and most other cities in Connecticut pay their workers — will help alleviate staffing problems.

Combined with the planned staffing increases, Elicker's budget calls for an additional \$8 million in funding for New Haven Public Schools. According to Elicker, \$3.5 million will come from an increase in Educational



Elicker told the News that he is working with unions to solidify contracts and hopes that the salary increases in the budget will help alleviate staffing problems. / Yash Roy, Staff Photographer

Cost Sharing funding from the state while the other \$4.5 million will come from the city's coffers.

The budget increase can largely be accounted for by the recently ratified teacher's contract, which increases teacher's salaries by 15 percent over the next three years.

Finally, the city's budget is making two administrative shifts. First, New Haven Free Public Library will now be under the direction of the community services administrator instead of the chief administrative officer.

According to Elicker, this shift represents the important space NHFPL occupies in connecting residents with social services. He said that this change will reflect a commitment to making libraries a "community hub and gathering place for residents."

Second, the city plans to create the Office of Policy, Management

and Grants, which will split off from the current finance department and focus on streamlining "the work of preparing and reviewing the budget, preparing multi-year plans, guiding the city through financial audits, and improving the City's grant process."

The 2023-2024 budget proposal will now move to the Board of Alders, where the Aldermanic Finance Committee, under Marchand, plans on holding public information and hearing sessions on March 13 and March 16. The Board of Alders must pass a budget by the first Monday of June.

City Hall is located at 165 Church St.

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Police make arrests after drive-by shooting behind Science Hill

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more firearms that police suspect have also been involved in shootings around the city.

New Haven police were dispatched to 31 Lawrence St. at 8:54 a.m. on Monday after witnesses reported two vehicles chasing each other while rounds were being fired from at least one of the vehicles. According to NHPD, no person was hit by the gunfire, but one parked vehicle was struck by a bullet.

Yale Police issued a Yale Alert email at 9:02 a.m. informing students about the shooting. The Yale Police Department then issued an all-clear at 10:39 a.m.

Shortly after responding to the call, NHPD located one of the two cars, an Acura MDX in Fair Haven with "numerous bullet holes." The Acura had been reported stolen out of Hamden on Feb. 26.

"A short time later, members of the Shooting Task Force, Criminal Intelligence Unit, and the Hamden Police Department located the Dodge Durango in Hamden," Public Information Officer Capt. Rose Dell wrote to the News.

Ben Berkowitz witnessed some of the incident after dropping children off at school. Berkowitz witnessed the Dodge Durango barge into the intersection on Whitney Avenue, where he was driving.

"I then saw a man lean out of the car and I could see a pistol," Berkowitz told the News. "I turned left, and I could hear gunshots. I stopped near a woman who was hiding behind a tree and called 911 and the officer who responded found three bullet casings."

The shooting forced 10 schools into a full lockdown on Monday. Not all schools that faced lockdowns were close to the area of the shooting, leading to questions as to why a lockdown order was issued.

According to Jacobson, New Haven Public Schools security regularly monitors police radios to monitor for threats. When NHPS heard of the shots

fired on Monday morning, they instituted a lockdown in some schools. The lockdown order was expanded to more schools in New Haven when NHPS officials feared that the shooting was moving and thus posed a threat to a wider radius of schools.

Jacobson told the News that the miscommunication probably came from police dispatch describing the shooting over radio as an active shooting, leading NHPS to believe that there was an active shooter in a building instead of two cars shooting between each other.

"I am worried about any miscommunication related to school security but am also relieved that it resulted in lockdowns, as opposed to the oppo-

site of what could have happened," BOE board member Darnell Goldson told the News. "I have confidence that the police and school security will correct the communication issues. At the end of the day, it is better safe than sorry."

Jacobson told the News that the department plans on reviewing the procedure of communication with NHPS to ensure that "traumatizing active shooter" lockdowns are prevented as often as possible.

New Haven Public Schools serve 19,000 students.

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Claire Sattler '23 and Lucas Miner '24 on their return to the Jeopardy stage

"JEOPARDY!" FROM PAGE 1

High School Reunion Tournament. Sattler and Miner both won their quarterfinals earlier this week, on Monday and Tuesday, respectively. The pair spoke to the News about their journey to "Jeopardy!", their study tactics and the friendships they formed on the show.

"My first time on the show, it was just absolutely a fantasy," Sattler said. "I was like a kid at Disney World. This time, it was a little different. I was more just kind of having a good time. It felt a bit like a homecoming. It was a reunion."

Both students were originally introduced to "Jeopardy!" by older family members. At age nine, Sattler shocked her mother by answering every Kids Week question correctly. From there, she said, her mom was her biggest supporter, signing her up for auditions each year and helping her realize her capability.

Miner was introduced to "Jeopardy!" by his grandmother. Each time he visited her, he said, they watched the show together, and it was she who ultimately encouraged him to try out for the Teen Tournament.

The process of making it onto "Jeopardy!" is complicated, both Sattler and Miner explained. First, hopefuls must take an online trivia test. If they pass, they are then entered into an audition lottery, from which only

a third of entrants are selected to audition. Potential contestants are then flown to a studio, where they play a mock game of "Jeopardy!" and conduct interviews.

For Sattler, the process of getting on the show was long and difficult. She passed the online test three times before she was finally offered her first audition for Kids Week at age 12. This audition was unsuccessful, though, and she didn't end up booking the show until four years later, when she was selected for the Teen Tournament.

Miner was offered his first audition — for the Teen Tournament — during his junior year of high school. He was asked to compete on the show weeks later.

Neither Sattler nor Miner found studying to be effective preparation for their "Jeopardy!" qualification.

"The key thing that everybody always asks is 'Oh, how do you study?'" Sattler said. "And the answer is, like, you do, but you don't. There's only so much studying will do for you."

Sattler said that she only encountered one question during her time on the show that she learned the answer to while actively studying. The rest of the questions, she explained, asked about information she already knew.

Miner echoed this sentiment, and pointed to his lifelong interest in "Jeopardy!" and trivia as integral to his preparation for the High School Reunion Tour-

nament. A key part of his studying, he said, was just watching the show every night.

"To an extent it really is just an inborn thing," Miner said. "I've always been a trivia kid. I did Quiz-bowl in high school, so a lot of it was simply refreshing quizbowl knowledge that I already had."

Strategy is much more important than content, both Sattler and Miner said. Tactics like wagering, buzzer strategy, category selection and hunting for Daily Doubles, they explained, can make or break a game.

Due to their busy Yale schedules, the students often had little time to prepare, but they found an unexpected gauntlet: New Haven bars. While Miner and his friends often end their Monday nights at Old Heidelberg's weekly trivia night, Sattler and her trivia team are regular champions at Rudy's Tuesday night trivia games.

"It's so nice to be able to go to a place once a week and just do trivia with my friends," Sattler said. "Even though it wasn't like I was actively studying, it was a nice little refresher on how it feels to be competing."

Reflecting on their time in Los Angeles filming the Reunion Tournament, both Sattler and Miner emphasized the close bonds they formed behind the scenes. They spoke to the fast and close nature of these intra-contestant friendships.

"I think we all sensed that it was more about the experience than the winnings or the national fame."

Miner said. "It was about those five days that we were there and the bonding that we could do and the collective memories that we could form, rather than any sort of visceral competition. In some ways, playing the game was just a bonus to hanging out with friends."

Shriya Yarlagadda, a sophomore at Harvard who competed in the High School Reunion Tournament alongside Sattler and Miner, added that the friends she made on the show are like family to her.

Yarlagadda is particularly close with Sattler, who stayed with her at Harvard during this year's Yale-Harvard game. She highlighted her admiration for Sattler, pointing specifically to her intelligence and her ability to light up any room she walks into.

"I read somewhere, and I wholly agree, that the operative word of the Jeopardy High School Reunion Tournament is not 'tournament' but 'reunion,'" Sattler said. "I honestly imagine my life without these people. And that's crazy, considering I met them on this crazy fluke chance of being asked to compete on a game show for two days when I was 16."

In addition to his valuable on-show relationships, Miner emphasized how supportive his Yale friends were throughout his "Jeopardy!" experience. He pointed specifically to housemate Daniel Shimberg '25 and close friend Andrew DeWeese '24, both of whom helped him study in the weeks leading up to his appearance on the show.

"I really admire how hard he studied for this," DeWeese said. "We'd be working out in the gym together, and on his off-sets, I'd just be quizzing him on his 'Jeopardy!' book. We went skiing in January, and he had that book out on the chairlift the whole time."

Shimberg recalled huddling around the television. In their house playing mock "Jeopardy!" games late into the night. There wasn't a single question throughout all of their practice rounds that Miner could not answer, he said.

Support from fellow Yalies has perhaps been strongest, though, since his episode has aired, Miner said. He described being completely overwhelmed by the amount of peers who attended a watch party he hosted for his quarterfinal game.

"It's hard to quantify just how much of Yale I carried that onto the 'Jeopardy!' stage," Miner said. "It sounds cheesy, but I don't think I would have been able to go back on the show without knowing that when it aired, I would have the full support of this community. I mean, underneath my Final Jeopardy answer, I wrote 'Boola Boola.'"

Last fall, Matt Amodio GRD '23 won 38 consecutive games, earning the third highest winnings of any "Jeopardy!" contestant in history.

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“We’re not running away from adulthood.”
KATY SHANG CHI AND THE LEGEND OF THE TEN RINGS

RuPaul’s Drag Race contestant visits Yale Law School

BRIAN ZHANG
STAFF REPORTER

RuPaul’s Drag Race contestant Robin Fierce may not have a college degree, but she stepped into the role of professor for the dozens of students who attended her Feb. 28 talk at the Yale Law School.

Fierce made history as the first drag queen guest speaker in the law school’s nearly two centuries of existence, taking her audience through dramatic readings of three children’s and young adult books and then showcasing a dance number to Gorgon City and Jennifer Hudson’s EDM bop “Go All Night.”

“To be drag is art,” Fierce, who jokingly asked students to call her “Professor Robin Fierce,” said at the talk. “It is expression [and] it is a release of a feminine side that is oftentimes suppressed by family members or the world. How are you banning art when there are so many different forms of art out there?”

The three stories — “Anti-Racist Baby” by Ibram X. Kendi, “And Tango Makes Three” by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson and an excerpt from “All Boys Aren’t Blue” by George M. Johnson — embody an overarching theme of the night: the intersectionality of Black and queer history, as well as the need to embrace the cultural longevity of minority identities beyond Black history and pride months.

Fierce’s performance arrives at a time of mounting anti-trans legislation and anti-drag hate. Drag story hours for children lie at the busy intersection between national political censorship of queer communities of color and violence from far-right, anti-LGBTQ groups. The struggle to define drag and the discomfort that comes with it can easily evolve into a gateway for hatred, Fierce, who started experimenting with drag at age 20, said.

The real purpose of drag storytelling and vocal performances is to bridge the gap between the different queer and non-queer communities through empathy, Fierce added, not to push “transitioning” propaganda or ideologies of sexual orientation on children as anti-trans and anti-drag extremists suggest. Leaders of the Drag Story Hour program encourage the public to think of readings as a celebration of diversity and dissolution of “rigid gender restrictions.”

The point of drag storytelling is to capture children and adults who are unfamiliar with the culture of drag in a “fairytale” world, where they can ask questions and learn about a whole group of people who are underrepresented in history books, Fierce explained, recalling the times when a child would walk up to her after a reading and mistake her for a Disney princess. It was during these moments, Fierce learned, that



BRIAN ZHANG/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Drag queen Robin Fierce came to the YLS for a children’s book reading and discussion with students about the current political animosity against drag culture.

some forms of discrimination are taught and that prejudiced adults can impose and pass on labels like “uncomfortable” or “weird” when describing unfamiliar lifestyles.

Host and co-chair of diversity, equity and inclusion at the Graduate School Senate AJ Hudson ENV ’19 LAW ’23 asked about Fierce’s thoughts on the stripping of College Board’s AP African American curriculum, an effort that he said was partially rooted in the significant crossover between Black and queer culture. Fierce turned to the silver lining of the situation, explaining that controversy and resistance can be interpreted as signs of progress and of just how far trans and Black activism has come.

Attendee Mason Sands LAW ’24 spoke about Florida Governor Ron DeSantis ’01’s educational agenda in his home state of Florida — which has recently included the banning of diversity, equity and inclusion roles and offices — before asking Fierce “What gives you hope?”

Teaching general “acceptance” — whether it’s acceptance of race, queerness or culture — was Fierce’s answer. Building communities, finding strength in existing ones and handing children the power to imagine are the “lights” that keep her

motivated, despite the risks that performing drag and being open about her sexuality can entail. She emphasized countering hatred with positivity, education and unity, given the intersectional nature of oppression across identities and backgrounds.

Changing the boundaries of education is exactly the reason why Hudson wanted to host a drag queen at YLS.

The choice to do so here at YLS, rather than at other parts of the University campus was “political,” Hudson said. It was an attempt at challenging the norm, changing what was “safe” and “accepted” as a “legal academic conversation,” he explained.

Hudson told the News that having Fierce speak at YLS was also a form of protest following what he saw as an onslaught of “problematic” guest speakers invited by the Federalist Society branch at Yale, including Kristen Waggoner, an anti-LGBTQ speaker and member of Alliance Defending Freedom, which the Southern Poverty Law Center has condemned as a hate group.

“Many of the queer students at the law school do not feel safe there or want to spend any extra time in that building,” Hudson wrote to the News. “To pay a drag

queen to come speak — a directly system-impacted person whose expertise is just as valuable as a heterosexual cisgender white man, lawyer or judge, it’s historic.”

Hudson emphasized that drag and Yale as an institution are not separate. The David Geffen School of Drama and Yale Cabaret has historically put on a drag show with local queens, and drag individuals have also made appearances at the Divinity School, the School of Management and the School of the Environment. Last year, on April 23, playwright and drag artist Noah T. Parnes ’22 presented “Zhushka: A Drag Show” in the Davenport-Pierson theater.

Hudson explained that YLS, however, is a cloister where heightened enforcement of security and an absence of shared spaces can cause a disconnect between law students and the rest of the graduate community. He hopes that his “radical” decision will encourage future students to reconsider the meaning of leadership and the criteria that restrict who has the right to a vocal platform.

“I would honestly say that although in a somewhat fringe way, drag and in turn queer politics have permeated most of Yale,” Hudson wrote. “I hope that [tonight] broke some of the boundaries, real and

imagined, that our audience members and classmates held.”

At the end of the night, Marshall Fuller, known professionally as DJ Edgewood, started turning up the music. Jennifer Hudson’s vocals pulsed through the room, and Fierce hopped quickly into the rhythm, showing off an choreographic lineup of surprise splits, twirls and dance moves.

Audience members were up on their feet chanting along as they reached out their arms into the aisles, hoping to shake hands with Fierce.

The music blasting into the hollow hallways outside, the crowd emerging in an uproar and lips everywhere struggling to keep up with Jennifer’s “Give me what I want / And I’ll give you what you need.” The students watched as the YLS auditorium transformed into a dance floor.

Fierce placed 12th on Season 15 of RuPaul’s Drag Race, a reality television show that invites drag queens to compete in talent competitions for a cash prize and the crown of America’s Next Drag Superstar.

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Yale sees 83 residential college transfer requests



JACK DEVLIN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Yale College Dean’s Office received 83 requests from students to transfer residential colleges for the 2023-24 school year. 63 of these requests were approved.

BY KAITLYN POHLY
STAFF REPORTER

While the selection process for on-campus housing during the upcoming school year is not set to begin until March 8, some students’ housing journeys are already well underway.

Students looking to transfer between residential colleges had to submit applications to the Yale Col-

lege Dean’s Office by Feb. 13. The office then examined requests during a 10-day period and notified students of their final decision on Feb. 23. Of the 83 students who submitted requests to transfer residential colleges, 63 were approved. Last year, the office received 138 requests of which only 52 were approved.

“Housing transfers need to balance out across the colleges,” Dean of Student Affairs Melanie Boyd told

the News. “The total numbers in each college should stay the same, even as a small set of students move.”

While the option to transfer between residential colleges was suspended during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Yale College Undergraduate Regulations for the 2022–2023 school year permitted students to request a change of college affiliation if “a student has compelling reasons and there is

space in the college to which they wish to transfer.”

Boyd elaborated that there are a few crucial factors that make a transfer application successful. These include the overall advising portfolio of the residential college dean’s office, the availability of housing and the presence or absence of student sponsors and prospective suitemates within the desired college.

Siona Jain ’26, whose request to transfer from Pierson College to Trumbull College was accepted, explained that her reason for switching was entirely social, as most of her friends reside in Trumbull.

“I requested a transfer because I’m currently in a stand-alone single on the Berkeley side of [Lanman Wright Hall] so I never got to know the Pierson girls well enough to pursue a suite together,” she explained.

Similarly, Lauren Gilman ’26 also requested to change her affiliation from Benjamin Franklin College to Silliman College for social reasons. However, Gilman also noted a geographic convenience factor in connection with her request as Silliman is located more centrally on campus. Her request was also accepted.

Grace Hopper student Caroline Glessing ’26 was not successful in her request to transfer to Davenport College.

“Many of my friends and teammates are in Davenport, so I thought it would be fun to room with my friends,” Glessing, who is a member of the track and field team, said. Despite having four student sponsors as prospective suitemates, Glessing’s request was denied. Although her application was unsuccessful, Glessing stated that the overall transfer process was clear and straightforward. Students wishing to transfer, Glessing explained, had only to write a short statement justifying their change of affiliation.

Yale College has 14 residential colleges.

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“I want to fly, I want to run. I even want to fall. I just never want to stop.” KABIR YEH JAWAANI HAI DEWAANI

Advocates at State Capitol call to cap rent increases at 2.5 percent

BY YASH ROY AND MAGGIE GRETHER
STAFF REPORTERS

Hundreds of supporters endorsing a measure to cap rent in Connecticut to 2.5 percent and end no-fault evictions have taken to the State Capitol over the last week to make their voices heard.

The Connecticut Tenants Union, as well as allied advocacy groups, have pushed the state legislature to limit rent increases, end no-fault evictions and strengthen protections for tenants. The House heard testimony last week in a committee hearing that ran through the night until 7 a.m. On Monday, the analogous Senate bill had the rent cap provision stripped and proponents of the measure were prevented from testifying.

“Yesterday — might be at 5 p.m. — we noticed a tiny note on the agenda for the hearing today about the removal of the rent cap portion,” New Haven tenant union advocate Luke Melonakos-Harrison told the News. “There was a lot of controversy at the start of the hearing today because we weren’t allowed to testify on the rent cap.”

Melonakos-Harrison added that opponents of the rent cap provision, largely landlords, were allowed to continue testifying against the measure even when proponents were gavelled off. Connecticut Tenants Union Organizer Chinye Ijeli MED ’24 told the News that a Spanish-speaking person who wished to testify was prevented from speaking and was asked by legislators if she had brought her own translator. The Connecticut State Legislature is required to provide translating services for people who wish to testify.



KAREN LIN/SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

As hearings began for two bills supporting rent caps, tenant union advocates claimed that politicians bent rules to limit testimony in favor.

SB 4 and HB 6588 were both proposed by Democrats in the State House and Senate, including New Haven’s Senators Martin Looney and Gary Winfield. The original bills proposed a four percent cap on rent increases.

At the House hearing last week, more than 300 advocates for rent caps came to testify, but a WiFi outage delayed the hearing for hours. After WiFi was restored, advocates testified in favor until the morning of the next day while facing opposition from state Republicans.

“It was mostly Republican legislators at first who were staunchly opposed to rent control,” Ijeli told the News. “Normal civilians would testify and then the Republicans would go on long rants about why rent controls would ruin the housing market which was tough to hear and we sometimes had to step out of the room.”

On Tuesday, the State Senate’s decision to strip the rent cap language from SB 4 caught advocates by surprise since normally legislative text must be changed at least five days before it is heard at a public hearing. No formal notice of the change was provided to people planning to testify except for a note on the committee’s agenda.

During the hearing, Housing Committee Chair Senator Marilyn Moore gavelled off supporters of the rent cap, saying that the rent cap text was no longer a pertinent part of the bill. Opponents of the rent cap were allowed to speak unfettered for hours according to Melakonos-Heydon. Later — between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. — supporters of the proposal were then told that they were allowed to begin speaking in favor of the rent cap provisions. Moore did not respond to the News’ request for comment.

“They didn’t notify us enough time in advance,” Ijeli told the News. “Also, people can speak in a hearing about whatever they want. If they say you should add rent caps back in, they should be allowed to.”

Proponents of the bill argue a cap is necessary to address skyrocketing rents across the state — last year, rents increased 12 percent across Connecticut, and in New Haven specifically, rents spiked around 19 percent. Currently, 53 percent of Connecticut renters are “cost burdened,” or spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent and utilities.

The 2.5 percent cap proposed by Connecticut Tenants Union reflects the average annual rental increase in Connecticut between 2000 and 2020, before the pandemic.

Ryan Sutherland MED ’26, a first-year medical student at Yale Medical School, also testified about the diffi-

culties of making rent as a student. Sutherland wrote about the stress of working three part-time jobs while balancing clinical and academic class loads. They reported that their rent had recently increased by 11 percent, and said they had dealt with numerous maintenance issues with their landlord.

“I have never worked harder and have never felt poorer,” Sutherland wrote in their testimony.

The movement for rent caps has united a variety of tenants across different living situations. Kenneth David Delohery, president of Connecticut Manufactured Homeowners Alliance, which advocates for mobile homeowners throughout the state, told the News that support for rent caps is incredibly high among mobile homeowners. Delohery, who is 67 years old, highlighted the fact that mobile home communities tend to include older people and people with disabilities living on fixed income.

Last year, Delohery received a rent increase of around seven to eight percent; the biggest increase he’s ever received. He’s been door-knocking and phone banking over the past month to generate support for the bill.

“People [in mobile home communities] are looking and realizing that in three or four years, I’m not gonna be able to live here anymore,” Delohery said.

The public hearing for HB 6588 and SB 4 last Tuesday lasted over 14 hours total.

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New Haven mega-landlord fined \$1,500 for housing code violations

BY MEGAN VAZ
STAFF REPORTER

The director of real estate investment company Ocean Management, which oversees over a thousand low-income housing units in the city through its affiliates, was fined \$1,500 for six housing code violations on Feb. 21.

Ocean Management principal Shmuel Aizenberg’s code violations — which included broken and absent smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, accumulated trash and a deteriorated sidewalk, as well as a ceiling and porch in danger of collapse — come as state lawmakers consider a bill that would quadruple the maximum fines that cities may charge offending landlords. Three Ocean Management tenants told the News they believe that governments must do more to prevent violations that pose health risks.

“It’s one part of the solution. I don’t think it’s the full solution,” said Ocean Management tenant Jessica

responses from Ocean Management or the city’s Livable Cities Initiative, which is responsible for investigating housing complaints and ensuring landlords comply with ordinances on living conditions.

After Stamp alerted her alder about her problems, she said an LCI inspector came to tour the property later that month. She brought attention to issues like broken smoke detectors, planks of wood with protruding nails, loose electrical wiring, various fire hazards and unvented washing machines, which spread dust and moisture throughout the laundry room.

According to Stamp, when she and the same LCI inspector walked through the property again in late December for a check-in, “almost nothing was done.” On this tour, Stamp and the inspector discovered garbage overflowing “all over the place,” open dumpster ducts and partially-destroyed furniture littered about. Stamp said that the debris was only cleared in mid-Jan-

following two cases in May and August. In total, Aizenberg has racked up about \$14,000 for 56 housing code violations in the past 10 months.

Altheda Bastien, a 58 Blake St. resident, shared that she has filed complaints for issues like “mice problems galore,” improperly discarded trash, maintenance failures and an unpainted exterior. She received a call from the city about two months ago inquiring about whether the property’s problems were resolved. Although Bastien told the News that she believes her complaints against Ocean Management made it to the legal system, there are no records of LCI charges at 58 Blake St. addressed by the courts in 2022.

Meanwhile, Amanda Watts, a resident of 1476 Chapel St. and member of the CT Tenants Union, told the News that they filed complaints with Ocean Management and the city for a slew of problems at their building — including finding at least 10 mice in their apartment, having screeching radiators and noticing extremely disparate heating levels between some floors — to no avail.

“There are holes in the walls in our lobby,” Watts said. “I found some roaches in the washing machines. There are holes on the outside of our building. I saw that the fire escape that goes out of my window doesn’t go all the way to the ground, which is pretty dangerous... It’s super disrespectful, and inhumane and unjust, that my requests are just being flat out ignored.”

According to Watts, the property’s poor living conditions have affected one of their neighbor’s health, resulting in multiple doctors’ notes and a reduced ability to work.

They added that although no one ever arrived to address the radiator problem after they filed a report with Ocean, the issue was marked as closed on their tenant portal. Bastien, who has a “paper trail of complaints a mile long” in the tenant portal, recalled instances where Ocean Management took a lax attitude toward problems she reported. She added that they often blamed their lack of urgency on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ocean Management did not respond to a request for comment on this story. The New Haven Independent reported that at his court appearance last week, Aizenberg promised that “[their] plan is not to visit here anymore” and that the company has hired contractors to prevent future violations.

Stamp confirmed that Ocean hired a contractor who accompanied her and the LCI inspector on their Jan. 20 visit. Nonetheless, she expressed frustration with the contractors’ specific focus on dealing with issues brought to the LCI instead of tenants’ general problems, especially as the LCI only handles one housing unit at a time.

“Why are they hiring somebody to clean up the mess instead of preventing it in the first place?” Stamp said. “Now they’re just putting a bandaid on it when LCI comes out. And I think that’s going to prevent them from being held accountable for what they were doing in the first place.”

Preceding each court appearance, Ocean Management addressed all of their respective charges in addition to other issues discovered by the LCI. At Stamp’s property, this included fixing the inadequate lighting, installing locks on boiler areas, filling holes in the walls with cement and placing a smoke detector in her apartment.

On the same day that Aizenberg appeared in housing court, Mayor Justin Elicker spoke before state legislators in support of a bill allowing cities to raise maximum fines against offender landlords. The bill, proposed by New Haven’s Representative Roland Lemar, would increase maximum fines from \$250 per violation to \$1,000 per violation.

“Frankly, a \$250 fine is often insufficient for egregious and repeat offenders, as the fines are simply treated as the cost of doing business, and landlords either don’t proactively get into front of problems or deliberately fail to fix them,” Elicker told the News. “That’s why we’re advocating that the state legislature increase the maximum penalty to up to \$1,000 to help ensure chronic, bad acting landlords manage their properties properly on behalf of their tenants.”

The three Ocean Management tenants told the News that they support the proposal to quadruple fines, but added that the bill should only serve as a first step toward holding wealthy landlords accountable. Stamp stressed that the fines were “better than nothing,” but that \$50,000 in fines would amount to very little compared to the profits Ocean Management makes collecting rent.

Bastien and Stamp, who stressed that Aizenberg’s repeated violations put lives at risk, proposed that offender landlords face time in jail.

Watts argued for heavier non-criminal legal repercussions in addition to the fines, which they said should be increased even further.

“If slumlords don’t care about actual people that they’ve taken responsibility for, then we have to hit them in their pockets,” Watts said. “These are real people’s lives — the families that live here and children that live here — are subjected to these conditions, and no one should ever have to be living under the conditions.”

There are currently three bills sitting in the state legislature that include provisions allowing cities to boost fines against landlords. Ward 1 Alder Eli Sabin ’22 agreed that Ocean Management’s repeated court appearances have demonstrated that the fines are not high enough.

Sabin told the News that the city should also engage in “proactive enforcement” of housing ordinances — as opposed to “responsive enforcement” — to ensure living conditions remain safe. He said that if the bill to raise fines on landlords passes, cities could be allowed to keep some of the revenue and allocate it towards housing code enforcement efforts.

A representative for the LCI did not respond to a request for comment from the News. Instead, city spokesperson Len Speiller provided the News with the statement from Elicker.

Stamp, who previously spoke to the Yale Daily News Magazine about systemic problems in the LCI’s case management system, similarly insisted that the LCI must begin doing licensing visits to every single Ocean Management property, in addition to being more responsive to complaints and hiring more staff.

“If they went through every single Ocean property, my guess is they would find at every single Ocean property that there were housing code violations,” Stamp said. “And some of them would be so severe, they would have to condemn the buildings. But the LCI is not doing that.”

Currently, Stamp said she and other 311 Blake St. residents are dealing with a rodent issue, with several tenants finding mice nests in their apartments.

The housing code violations included in this month’s case occurred at 311 Blake St., 56 Blake St. and 57 Carmel St.

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COURTESY OF ALTHEDA BASTIEN

As Ocean Management tenants say more must be done to address dismal living conditions, state lawmakers consider quadrupling housing violation fines.

Stamp, a leader of the Blake Street tenants union. “If you are being neglectful of someone’s housing, that’s the air that they’re breathing the entire time, and they’re sleeping there. If there’s rodents and cockroaches, and you’re just exposed to all of these different things ... this is a long term health exposure.”

Stamp, a resident of 311 Blake St., filed one of the complaints against Aizenberg that made it to the courts. After she raised concerns about broken light bulbs and debris in the building’s laundry room in early November, Stamp received no

uary — after Aizenberg was fined \$6,500 for 25 violations in December, but before the LCI made its most recent visit on Jan. 20.

“We do have mice and skunks, and the feral cats who are in the area and they go through the bags,” Stamp said. “So I called in January and said ‘Hey, [the LCI is] coming back out.’ And so at that point like they got the garbage dumped. They had emptied within a day. They hired somebody to actually clean up the property.”

The December court appearance was Aizenberg’s third of 2022,

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Yale healthcare hackathon at Center for Biomedical Innovation returns in person



COURTESY OF ANTHONY TOKMAN

About 250 participants registered for the Yale Center for Biomedical Innovation and Technology hackathon, drawing a diverse group to create innovative solutions in healthcare.

BY LUCY ZHA
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The Yale Center for Biomedical Innovation and Technology held its first in-person healthcare hackathon since the start of the pandemic this week.

With about 250 people registered to compete across 15 teams, the event kickstarted on Feb. 24 with keynote addresses on the hackathon's theme, which this year was "patient engagement." Participants heard from Ena Williams, the senior vice president and chief nursing officer at the Yale New Haven Hospital, and Indira Negi, the deputy director of global health at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The purpose of the hackathon was to "provide an opportunity for people who are not clinicians or medical professions to tackle problems in healthcare," according to Monica Manmadkar, an undergraduate at Columbia University who also served as the hackathon's advertising and marketing lead.

"If you create a space of freedom and include a diversity of people, beautiful solutions can arise," said

Michael O'Brien, assistant clinical professor of surgery at the Yale School of Medicine, who served as a mentor for the hackathon.

Hackathon participants pitched their ideas in fast-paced one-hour meetings on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Their projects could fall into one of four tracks related to this year's theme: personalized therapy, patient monitoring, women's health or digital therapeutics. Networking and team formation began shortly after.

In 24 hours, participants came up with project ideas ranging from a webpage that provides educational resources and community support to parents of children facing mental health and substance abuse to customizable journals that commemorate the medical journey of children fighting with cancer.

Participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds, ranging from high school and undergraduate students to professionals in various fields such as finance, marketing, business operations and academia.

Hackathon participant Angelin Mathew '25 said that although her team members came from differ-

ent parts of the world, they could all testify to how stigma affects patients' healthcare experiences.

"It was my first hackathon, and it was so exciting to see how much we were able to think through and design in a weekend," Mathew said.

Throughout the competition, there were "floating mentors" and a "genius bar" which allowed participants to gain early guidance from a team of multidisciplinary mentors through practice presentations that took place prior to the final presentation on Sunday. The mentors' specialties included entrepreneurship, technology, business, medicine, science, design and law.

O'Brien, who worked as a mentor this year, was actually a participant himself in 2020, and said that the hackathon had been "life-changing." Prior to the event, he had practiced medicine as a physician for about 20 years. He found that the hackathon allowed him to combine his clinical expertise with people with backgrounds drastically different from his own to solve problems that otherwise felt stagnant in healthcare.

O'Brien's son also joined the hackathon in 2021, which took place

virtually due to the pandemic. As a high school student, he was "a master of Google Slides from school and designed the slide deck for his team's presentation," according to O'Brien.

The hackathon sparked O'Brien's son's enthusiasm for coding — two years later, he had already participated in the MIT Scratch program and taught himself Python.

The winning teams were announced on Sunday after participants delivered a three-minute presentation of their project followed by two minutes of questions from the judges. Kyle Feliciano '26 and Emily Qian '26, two students from the Yale School of Medicine, won the honorable mention \$1,000 prize with their app PlayFit, which aims to help encourage physical activity in youth through video game incentives.

The app gathers "activity indicators — like step count, heart rate, and general activity level — from the wearable technology a child might already be using," and then provides the user with an in-game reward "after a certain amount of activity has been accomplished," according to a description written by the team.

The team that won the \$5,000 Grand Prize designed "Emma's Story," which is "a journal to be created by pediatric oncology patients documenting their journey of cancer treatment, celebratory milestones, and positive memories," according to team members Jhonatan Nagasako, Zora Duan, Obinna Anosike and Andrea Orane.

The project idea emerged on Friday after multiple team members recounted their personal stories of battling diseases. They built prototypes of the journal overnight out of FedEx cardboard boxes, with cartoonish patterns and vibrant colors. They wanted the journal to appear relatable to a child fighting cancer.

"Because we were such a small group, everyone's idea[s] mattered," Nagasako said.

The team will meet with advisors from CBIT and others from the Yale community to get further feedback on the design.

W. Mark Saltzman and Maxwell Laurans are the faculty co-directors of the Yale Center for Biomedical Innovation and Technology.

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Yale professor wins Academy Award for technical achievement

BY MARIA KORLIK
STAFF REPORTER

Theodore Kim, associate professor of computer science at Yale, was awarded a Technical Achievement Academy Award on Feb. 24.

Kim and his colleagues at Pixar Animation Studios — David Eberle, Fernando de Goes and Audrey Wong — received this award for the design and development of the Fict2 elastic simulation system, which simulates elastic materials like skin and muscle in animation.

The system builds upon Pixar's original cloth simulator Fict, which was first used for "Monster's Inc." in 2001. Fict was used to model the dynamics of the clothing for one of the film's main characters, Boo, and according to Kim, it was a breakthrough at the time. However, animated films get more sophisticated every year.

"What if Boo wears a shirt with tight cuffs, or she wants to put on a belt, or wants to put on a multi-layers flamenco dress?" Kim asked. "Fict couldn't handle complicated clothing like that."

This demand for more complex animation is what led to the development of Fict2, which de Goes

described as an "in-house physically-based simulator for soft bodies" with the capability of "add[ing] physics to any 3D objects in our scenes."

In order to better model elastic materials, Kim and his collaborators needed to redesign collision detection and response algorithms. Previous simulation programs, Kim explained, used methods that were slow and unstable. He and his collaborators needed to revisit the basic physics of the algorithms in order to develop fast and precise methodologies of computing the core calculations involved.

Kim said that their main task was to find "some elegant new equations that had been hiding deep inside the math this entire time," so that they could increase the efficiency and stability of their algorithms.

According to Eberle, the development of Fict2 first became necessary for Pixar's film "Coco," as the previous system, Fict, only supported collision handling at discrete steps. For example, the animated cloth would not stay in place on the fast-moving and thin skeleton characters in the film, Eberle said, so it was necessary to add continuous handling methods to accommodate that. He also had to spend time improving the

performance and multi-threading of the simulator, he added, because the increased garment complexity in the film led to many layers being stimulated at once.

"These features are essential to delivering visually pleasing simulation results even when the animated character's underlying motion isn't physically plausible," Eberle said.

De Goes said that his role in the project was co-authoring the design of new physically-based material models and integrating them into the simulator. One of the goals of Fict2 was to make computer-generated animations look believable even when they stretch reality, he explained. Rather than adjusting poses frame by frame, the team aimed to provide a system that could assist artists in infusing physics into their animations.

According to Eberle, another goal of Fict2 was adding volume simulation, in addition to simulating shell surfaces such as cloth. He noted that he was "very lucky" to have Kim, de Goes and Brennan Smith in the research group, as they had already been working on "novel formulations that allowed for computational efficiency and would provide a new bar of stability that can hold up under



COURTESY OF THEODORE KIM

Kim designed an elastic simulation system for more efficient and realistic animations.

an onslaught of production challenges." Eberle was able to integrate their research into the Fict2 simulator, allowing them to simulate cloth and volumes together for characters like Wilden Lightfoot in "Onward."

"Working on a project like this takes a good amount of mathematics, physics, and computer science," de Goes said. "It requires close collabora-

tion with our artists so that we can mold our work based on what they want to achieve."

Kim previously won an Academy Award in Technical Achievement in 2012 for developing the Wavelet Turbulence software for detailed gas simulation.

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ARTS

“It’s not my job to make you feel like a man. I can’t make you something you’re not.” **ASTRID LEONG** CRAZY RICH ASIANS

Tillet discusses cultural criticism and historical healing at Poynter event

BY JANE PARK
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Scholar and writer Salamishah Tillet grew up reading British detective novels.

While reading Agatha Christie’s “Murder on the Orient Express,” Tillet said she was eager to analyze the reading and “outsmart the pace of the writer.” In 9th grade English class, she learned how to apply these close reading habits to literary criticism assignments. Tillet would go on to write Pulitzer Prize-winning criticism pieces for the New York Times Magazine and Harper’s Bazaar.

On Thursday, Feb. 23, Tillet visited Yale for a Poynter Fellowship-sponsored event introduced and facilitated by lecturer in English and Pierson College residential tutor Margaret Spillane. Speaking with members of the Yale community, Tillet discussed her work in cultural criticism — specifically her interest in “the cultural afterlife” and retellings of African American works.

“If I’m using this idea that the detective finds a pattern and the critic pursues the pattern, [my pattern is] that the words I always choose have many different iterations and they may spark another generation to create their own response to it,” Tillet said.

In 2021, Tillet authored “In Search of the Color Purple: The Story of an American Masterpiece,” a cultural critique and analysis of Alice Walker’s novel “The Color Purple” and its subsequent adaptations. “The Color Purple” follows the story of Celie, a young Black girl, through the letters she addresses to God. Since its publication in 1982, the novel has received critical acclaim for its portrayal of Black queer romance and discussion of solidarity and resistance among its Black female protagonists.

Tillet discussed the series of adaptations that have followed from the initial novel, as it “becomes a movie that becomes a musical that is now becoming a movie musical.”

“What I wanted to learn is what created the possibility of the novel in the first place,” Tillet said of her research. “Why would someone come along and want to change its form? What does that change in form mean? What are the anxieties,

controversies, celebrations of the new form, say about the society at the time?”

In particular, Tillet touched upon a controversial moment in Steven Spielberg’s movie adaptation of the novel — the kiss scene between two female characters, Shug and Celie. While Walker explores Shug and Celie’s romantic and sexual relationship in greater depth, the Spielberg film only features a singular kiss between Shug and Celie.

“[Walker] sees the film for the first time and she gets a headache, she feels like the kiss is the censor’s knife,” Tillet said. “But what was interesting for me is that the artist Mickalene Thomas, as a young girl, sees this movie with her mom. And that kiss gives her permission as a Black queer child to become an artist, but also to embrace her identity. The very thing that we can critique and say doesn’t do the [novel] justice, something like Mickalene Thomas finds so much possibility in.”

In addition to her discussion of “The Color Purple,” Tillet also spoke about her experiences as a survivor of sexual assault. Connecting her experiences to Toni Morrison’s “Beloved,” Tillet shared her understanding of broader themes of healing within African American art — further discussed in her book, “Sites of Slavery.”

Tillet discussed the “ghost” that haunts the main character in “Beloved” through flashbacks, likening it to her own experiences dealing with trauma and its recurrences while in therapy.

“You have a whole body of literature in which African American artists are telling us that slavery is the thing that’s haunting us, these flashbacks are, in fact, the things that haunt the nation,” Tillet said.

After Tillet elaborated on her work, Professor Spillane opened the floor for audience members to ask questions. With the Q&A session making up more than half of the event, Tillet responded to multiple questions and often engaged in follow-up conversations.

Isa Dominguez ’24, who is also an opinion editor for the News, said that the format of the talk allowed her to interact with Tillet in a more casual, intimate setting.

“I’ve been to several talks, where [speakers] talk extensively about their work, so much so that



TIM TAI / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Salamishah Tillet spoke to the Yale community on Thursday, February 23rd at the Leitner House in Pierson College.

there’s only some time for questions,” Dominguez said.” But what I really, really appreciate from this [talk] was exactly this format, in which we could talk about anything and everything.”

Jane Nowosadko, head of public programs at Yale Center for British Art, asked Tillet about her interest in art and the curatorial questions that Tillet engages with in her upcoming project, “Pulling Together.” Working with historian and curator Paul Farber, Tillet will co-curate an exhibition that showcases experimental monumentality and the role of public art in civic movements.

“I’m interested in how what we see in public gives us new relationships to ourselves, the histories of those places, and how it gets activated and reanimated based on what’s put there today,” Tillet

said. “[Pulling Together] is the first public exhibition that’s going to be in the National Mall. It’s the 60th anniversary of the march in Washington and so we invited six artists to think about what stories remain untold in the mall.”

Currently the Henry Rutgers Professor of African American studies and creative writing at Rutgers University, Tillet has studied at institutions such as University of Pennsylvania, Brown University and Harvard University.

When Tillet was asked about her positionality as a Black woman in historically-white elite educational institutions, she reflected on how “lonely” it was as one of few Black women in privileged spaces. Specifically, Tillet referenced the “ridiculously low” composition of Black women in full professorial positions: nearly

two percent. Yet, Tillet hopes to use her relative privilege to empower others.

“The higher you get into these fields, the more lonely, the rare your presence is as a Black woman,” Tillet said. “So how do you both create opportunities for other people so you’re not alone and how do you fight within those spaces to open them up immediately? As the more access and privilege you have, that’s your responsibility. You don’t want to maintain it as an elite space, that would be counterproductive. That doesn’t excite me, what excites me is changing the space [of academia] to be more open.”

This event was held in the Leitner House of Pierson College.

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How former Yale professor Ron Carlos helps actors find their voices

BY JANE PARK
STAFF REPORTER

As someone invested in both acting and screenwriting, Sam Ahn ’24 spends a considerable amount of time thinking about dramaturgical questions. What makes good drama? How do you raise the stakes for both the characters and the audience? For Ahn, “theater is a mirror to ourselves.” However, he said the “mirror” within the theater does not seem to adequately reflect Asian voices.

When Ahn realized that there was no “centralized Asian community” at Yale, he decided to make his own collective, Asian American Coalition for Theater. After Ahn recruited Asian American friends within different theater spaces, the AACT board was formed in spring of 2022.

“I had a theater [professor] in a class I took last year say, ‘Theater is a revelation of the human condition,’” said Ahn. “It can be deeply affecting and impactful and moving and cathartic or devastating for anyone in theater: the actors, spectators, people working behind the scenes. There’s nothing else like it. And it’s just terribly sad when you can’t really relate to anything that’s being put on.”

Ahn hopes that AACT will disseminate information and “share knowledge” with those at Yale who have never engaged with theater before.

In addition to making theater and knowledge about Yale’s theater programs more accessible, the AACT works to foster community and shared spaces for Asian American student actors, playwrights, and directors. One of the ways the AACT does so is through a weekly playwrighting workshop.

“Playwriting is really a community form of writing,” Ahn

said. “You need to hear other people say your work, in order for you to really hear or know what your piece is. You can read it out loud yourself, and someone else can read it out loud. And there are two completely different things. And theater, in the end, is meant to be performed. It’s meant to be said, so you need someone else to say your work while you’re writing it.”

For AACT board member Olivia O’Connor ’24, AACT also offers Asian Americans a space to reflect and speak about shared experiences about being an Asian American actor in predominantly white theater spaces.

As a one-year old group, the AACT faces the challenges of maintaining a steady membership and establishing a presence on campus. Yet, according to O’Connor, there are “benefits” to working with a project “so early in the process.”

O’Connor told the News that the relatively new existence of AACT gives the board members more creative control over the operations and purpose of AACT.

“We’ve all collectively had a lot of input as to what the organization’s focus should be, and what kinds of events we want to do,” O’Connor told the News. “It’s very cool to be able to set the question of what we think is the best way for the organization to run.”

With a recent board turnover, the direction of AACT is set to change even more.

One of the newest members to join this board is Alicia Shen ’26, who hopes to contribute to “building robust and accessible programs” for those interested in participating in Asian-American theater.

“It’s just a very perfect group that fits a very important part of my identity,” Shen said. “Whenever I’m looking at theater, I’m



TIM TAI / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Former Lecturer in Acting at the David Geffen School of Drama Ron Carlos has written a book about accent training and coached actors on the sets of “Daisy Jones & The Six” and “Based on a True Story.”

most drawn to productions that represent my experience, and I haven’t been able to meet that many people who are Asian and do theater here. But I was really lucky because my first show at Yale featured Asian American characters so being more exposed to that community excites me.”

At the Saybrook Unbrook, from April 6 to April 8, the AACT will showcase their production of “Love Letters,” directed by Sam Ahn and

sponsored by the AACC. After watching and falling in love with the production as an eighth-grader, Ahn wanted to “put an Asian twist” on it.

“[‘Love Letters’] is a show about connecting when you’re super lonely. There’s a writer I like named Jay Caspian who wrote this book called ‘The Loneliest Americans’... It says that Asian Americans are the loneliest Americans because we’re trying to construct an identity that is essentially hol-

low. A Korean person doesn’t share the same experiences like a Pakistani except we both like to call ourselves Asian American. What do you make of that? There’s just a lot of fascinating stuff dramaturgically about Asian identity.”

AACT’s playwrighting circle occurs every Sunday from 1-3 p.m. in the AACC Yung Living Room.

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SPORTS

“We’ve won a lot of games. I’ve given them great performances. I don’t give excuses. I give them my all,” DAMIAN LILLARD PORTLAND TRAILBLAZERS SUPERSTAR

Bulldogs Advancing in ECAC Playoffs



MUSCOSPOTSPHOTOS.COM

The results of this weekend set the Yale program record for wins in a season, as the team currently sits at 28 wins so far this year.

W HOCKEY FROM PAGE 10

game-winning goal in the third period of game one when she buried a rebound from the front of the goal.

However, Lee wasn’t finished with the Crimson, as she once again scored the game-winning goal in game two and then added a third goal of the weekend for good measure as she and the Bulldogs ended Harvard’s season.

Lee, who played her first year with the Bulldogs during the 2019 season, stands with her fellow veteran players as those that have seen the transformation of the program in recent years.

“My class, along with Coach Bolding (who was hired before the start of our sophomore year), has been working hard to build YWIIH into a program that is a perennial contender,” senior defenseman Emma Seitz ’23 told the News earlier this season. “We take a lot of

pride in that journey and are excited to hopefully take the program to new heights.

The second player who stood out for the Bulldogs was goaltender Pia Dukaric ’25, who stymied the Crimson all weekend and posted her program record eighth shutout of the season in Game Two.

The Crimson only managed to put a combined 41 shots on goal in the two games while the Bulldogs peppered the opposite net with 45 shots in game one and 54 in game two. While the goalie was not called on to do much, Dukaric made some big saves in crucial moments to help her team to victory.

Despite it being the sophomore’s first playoff experience starting in goal, Dukaric has been praised by her teammates and coaches all year for her veteran approach to the game.

“Pia’s a veteran already, she’s a little bit older, she knows what’s at stake and she prepares well so

that’s a load off our shoulders,” head coach Mark Bolding said. “She will already be mentally ready. I think we’re gonna work on some basics, playoffs are gonna have a lot of dirty goals, traffic, screens, so we’ll work on some of those things but she prepares really really well so it’s a blessing.”

The Bulldogs now get to rest up and scout their opponents, as they’ll face off with the fourth-seeded Clarkson Knights next weekend. As the top seed in the ECAC Playoffs, Yale will also get the advantage of hosting both the semifinals and finals at Ingalls Rink.

The results of this weekend set the Yale program record for wins in a season, as the team currently sits at 28 wins so far this year.

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Bulldogs earn road win at Cornell

W BBALL FROM PAGE 10

into the game. Within the final two minutes of the quarter, Aastroem made a free throw, swished a three from at least four feet beyond the top of the arc and made another three pointer from even further out, putting the Bulldogs up 40–23 heading into halftime.

“[Limiting] the amount of shots they got on the defensive end helped us get more shot attempts,” Nyla McGill ’25 said.

The second half was more of the same story. Cornell came within 13 points of Yale in the third quarter but could not keep chipping away as the Bulldogs answered every Big Red

rally with rallies of their own. Yale ended the third quarter with a 21 point lead and finished the fourth quarter up by the same amount. The final score was 63–42.

Five Bulldogs — McDonald, McCann, Aastroem, Clark, and Kiley Capstraw ’26 — each scored at least nine points on the night.

Capstraw, who has started 15 games in her first year on campus, finished with nine points and four rebounds. Her performance compelled the Ivy League to name her Ivy League “Rookie of the Week” distinction this season.

McDonald led the Bulldogs with 15 points and nine rebounds. She also had two

assists and one block.

“She brings a lot to our team on and off the court,” Clark said about McDonald. “She’s a phenomenal interior defender so she provides an extra line of defense for us. She’s quicker than a lot of posts so it opens up a lot of opportunities for her offensively.”

The win ended the Bulldogs’ three game losing streak and put them at 6–7 in Ivy League play.

Yale will celebrate senior night before their next game — the last of their regular season — which will tip off on Saturday at 2:00 pm in John J. Lee Amphitheater against Brown (11–14, 4–9 Ivy).

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YALE ATHLETICS

Yale will celebrate senior night before their next game will tip off on Saturday at 2:00 pm in John J. Lee Amphitheater against Brown.

Bulldogs take down Cornell ahead of final game

M BBALL FROM PAGE 10

Jarvis did most of his damage in the paint, toasting Cornell defenders with a variety of nifty post moves and athletic finishes, but he also showed his ability to score from the perimeter, knocking down three of his four three-point attempts. On the season, Jarvis is now shooting 43.3 percent from deep.

Jarvis wasn’t the only Bulldog to record a milestone on Saturday night. With the win, Jones became just the second head coach in Ivy League history to reach 200 conference wins, the first being Princeton’s Pete Carril.

Jones, though, emphasized the importance of staying focused on the season rather than accolades.

“To be honest, not really,” Jones said when asked if the achievement meant anything to him. “I heard them say something about coach Jones on the speaker. I thought maybe I left my car running or something, and then I looked up and saw it was my 200th win. So I hadn’t really thought about it.

What’s more special is sharing it with this guy [Jarvis].”

With the victory, the Elis kept themselves even atop the Ivy League standings at 9–4 alongside the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton, who also won on Saturday. Yale has already clinched a berth in the Ivy League tournament, but still has a lot to play for this Saturday against Brown University in their final regular-season game on the schedule. With a win, the Bulldogs would earn the number one seed in the four-team tournament, meaning they would play the number four seed in the first round.

Penn(17–11, 9–4) and Princeton(18–8, 9–4) have also clinched tournament appearances, and the fourth seed will go to either Cornell or Brown(14–12, 7–6). If Brown defeats Yale next week, they will be guaranteed the fourth seed.

The game will be played at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday in Brown’s Pizzitola Sports Center.

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STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/MICHAEL GARMAND

The game will be played at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday in Brown’s Pizzitola Sports Center..

Squash competes against UVA, Harvard, Penn

MEN SQUASH FROM PAGE 10

On Sunday, the Bulldogs competed in the 3/4 playoffs against the University of Pennsylvania and played their last matches of the tournament. The men had a hard fight and rallied to beat the Quakers 5–4, which placed them third in the tournament.

“The team showed incredible grit and resilience on Sunday in the 3/4 playoff after losing to Harvard in a heartbreaking semifinal,” Nikhil Ismail ’24 wrote to the News. “We were able to bounce back from that loss and take down a team that we hadn’t beaten in 7 years in what was a true team effort. Everyone from positions 1–14 contributed to our success this season on and off the court and I think this weekend proved that.”

Ismail was last on for the Bulldogs in a game-deciding match, with the Bulldogs and the Quakers tied 4–4. He battled to beat his opponent 3–2, turning the victory over to the Bulldogs. Merritt Wurts ’25

played an important role for the Bulldogs by also winning with a close match of 3–2.

This was an exciting win for the Blue and White, as the men broke their 10-match losing streak against the Quakers.

“We proved to ourselves that we belong up there with the best teams in the country,” team captain Eric Kim ’23 wrote to the News. “It’s been a privilege to captain this group of guys this year. They made my job easy and although we didn’t reach our goal of winning a national championship, I’d rather lose with this team than win with another.”

Kim is the only graduating senior seeded in the top nine.

Looking ahead, some of the Bulldogs will compete in the CSA Individual and Doubles Championships at the Arlen Specter US Squash Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the weekend of March 1.

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YALE ATHLETICS

Yale will celebrate senior night before their next game will tip off on Saturday at 2:00 pm in John J. Lee Amphitheater against Brown.

“When in the storm, if you watch the tree turnk, you will see stability.” ALEJANDRO G. INRITU BIRDMAN

University announces construction plan for new SEAS quad



COURTESY OF KAI NIP

The project, which will begin this summer, includes the demolition of 17 Hillhouse Ave. and the construction of a new quadrangle in its place.

EVAN GORELICK
STAFF REPORTER

Over the next 10 to 15 years, the University will expand the School of Engineering & Applied Science’s campus presence through a construction overhaul of lower Hillhouse Avenue.

Yale intends to launch several major construction projects in the lower Hillhouse area, Provost Scott Strobel and SEAS Dean Jeffrey Brock told engineering faculty in a Thursday meeting. The project will take place on sites already owned and occupied by the University and will include the construction of a new SEAS quadrangle on the east side of Hillhouse Avenue. To accommodate the new facilities, the University will demolish Mason Laboratory, Helen Hadley Hall and the southern portion of Dunham Laboratory. The plan will also reorganize SEAS faculty offices by research focus rather than department.

The announcement follows the University’s 2022 announcement to establish SEAS as an autonomous faculty body with 30 new faculty members. The expansion, which will raise the SEAS ladder faculty size from 92 to 122, chiefly aims to add faculty in computer science — the most popular major

among engineering undergraduates and an area that has historically lacked institutional support — and materials science.

“We envision something that reflects both the history and heritage of Yale’s campus but also makes a bold statement about modern, forward-looking engineering for the future,” Brock told the News. “We’ll see spaces that are organized around new centers of activity, initiatives and research directions, in addition to things like collaborative spaces and spaces for innovation, makerspaces and entrepreneurship.”

Brock said that the plan was guided largely by the 2021 SEAS strategic vision report, which recommended that the University organize campus space by “research and teaching priorities rather than by department.” Yale has taken this organizational approach in several other recent facilities projects, including Kline Tower and 100 College Street.

The benefits of reorganization extend beyond facilitating research, biomedical engineering professor James Duncan told the News — it may also help SEAS recruit new faculty members.

“The construction/renovation plans will create new and updated space that will greatly

enhance both our teaching and our research activities,” Duncan wrote in email to the News. “As noted in the announcement, the new lower Hillhouse space will be organized around research priorities, which will help us when recruiting new faculty and working with colleagues across SEAS.”

These organizational priorities will closely parallel those outlined in the University’s 2016 Science Strategy Committee Report, including data science, quantum science and materials science.

A prominent feature of the plan is the new SEAS quad, which will be located on the eastern side of lower Hillhouse Ave., where 17 Hillhouse Ave., Mason Laboratory and Helen Hadley Hall stand today. The quad, Strobel explained, will be open to Hillhouse Avenue and ringed by modern lab spaces.

The project also seeks to modernize existing engineering buildings, including the Becton Center, Dunham Laboratory and Arthur K. Watson Hall, Strobel added. He pointed out that many such buildings are over a century old and were not designed for engineering teaching or research. 17 Hillhouse Ave., for example, was built to be the University’s health center.

Strobel said that the choice “to build engineering really at the heart of the campus” was not an accident. Rather, it reflects the University’s plan to make SEAS “the engineering school that’s most integrated with the rest of its University.”

The first step of the plan, which will begin this summer, is to convert Kirtland Hall into flexible classroom space to accommodate classes that would have taken place in the buildings being renovated or demolished. Kirtland Hall currently houses the psychology department, which will move to 100 College Street, as detailed in the Provost’s annual facilities report.

The next step will be to design two new buildings: one at the corner of Trumbull Street and Hillhouse Avenue, the other at the current site of Helen Hadley Hall. Strobel said that these projects are “probably still a year or two out.”

In addition to the lower Hillhouse construction, the University will simultaneously begin construction of the new physical sciences and engineering building at the north end of campus.

“I would say the motivation is not merely to accommodate growth,” Brock said. “We’ve seen a huge increase in [student] demand [for engineering], and, as we’ve moved to accommodate that, we’ve realized that we really need state-of-the-art facilities to recruit top faculty and sort of signal to the world that Yale is ready to lead in this area.”

Brock said that while he is skeptical of the inherent value of academic rankings, they were an important motivation for the project. He explained that, in the planning process, the University conducted “a deep dive into the different characteristics and elements of the rankings” to figure out what elements are important to the University Community.

“Certainly recruiting top faculty across engineering is a critical element that drives rankings,” Brock said. “But it’s also critical to what we can deliver in terms of research and in terms of education. Facilities are absolutely central to the recruiting process. Being able to bring in top faculty from other institutions or top faculty that are new PhDs requires that we offer them first-rate lab facilities that are integrated with the campus and the faculty.”

Rankings have been a particularly contentious subject for students and faculty in Yale’s computer science department, which continues to lag in rankings globally.

Students and faculty in computer science have long called for upgrades to the “outdated” Arthur K. Watson Hall, which currently houses the department. Several professors have said that the department’s sub-par facilities greatly impact its ability to attract world-class researchers and faculty members.

“We really made an active, deliberate decision to integrate computer science through the engineering school,” Brock said. “So what you’ll see is a shift of computer science out of the A.K. Watson building, where it cur-

rently sits, into multiple sites across the engineering campus.”

Brock gave several examples of how this organizational change will manifest itself in more substantive research changes. Robotics efforts in computer science, for instance, will become part of a larger robotics initiative that will include members of the mechanical engineering faculty. Likewise, efforts in artificial intelligence will be integrated throughout the engineering campus, allowing researchers to focus on algorithms and more outward-facing applications of AI and society.

Thursday’s announcement claims that the project will aid “Yale’s broad effort to address grand challenges of the 21st century,” like climate change and sustainable development. Applied physics student Saachi Grewal ’23 told the News that the University must commit to sustainable infrastructure development as part of this mission.

“Alongside investments in the SEAS department[s], it is necessary for Yale to consider itself culpable in its continued use and investment in fossil fuels,” Grewal said. “To support a generation of researchers focused on mitigating climate change, the growth of the SEAS department[s] must align with more rigorous sustainability goals and designs for infrastructural development.”

Grewal also noted that as a researcher on campus, she was excited to envision the increased capacity that the investment in SEAS could grant campus labs.

“This is truly a historic announcement,” computer science professor Amin Karbasi agreed. “There were two times in my career that I felt very hopeful about the future of AI and data science at Yale. The first time was when the Foundation for Data Science Institute was announced where I will be faculty in residence. And the second time was today.”

The University detailed 11 major construction projects in its annual facilities report this past October.

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Inside the Hahn Scholars program’s push to recruit top STEM students

BY ANIKA SETH & PRANAVA DHAR
STAFF REPORTER &
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

With a cohort of just 10 top students each year, Yale’s Hahn Scholars program is a little-known aspect of the University’s push to recruit high-achieving students in STEM.

The Hahn Scholars program, which is run by Associate Dean of STEM Education Sandy Chang ’88, supports students with strong science and engineering research backgrounds. The program offers a “tight-knit cohort” of students the opportunity to start conducting paid STEM research at the University in the spring of their first year, according to Chang. Additionally, Hahn scholars meet with each other and Chang monthly, and work with University faculty for career-building workshops.

Hahn Scholars also receive guaranteed funding — a stipend of \$4,300 — for one summer of research. It is not possible to apply to the program, as Hahn Scholars are informed of their selection during the admissions process.

“I’ve greatly enjoyed my experience as a Hahn Scholar,” said Lila Schweinfurth ’25. “I’ve loved learning from and connecting with others in the community, and Dean Chang has been an invaluable resource. The experience has helped me to grow as a researcher.”

Building a community of scientists is an integral aspect of the initiative. As part of the scholarship, students are required to participate in social events and research presentations hosted by the Hahn program. These events are intended to foster interactions between Hahn Scholars, Yale faculty mentors and others involved in research at Yale.

Chang said that when he became dean of STEM in 2017, the University already had programs committed to increasing diversity in STEM. Specifically, the Science, Technology

and Research Scholars program offers advising, research funding, laboratory experience and other forms of mentorship to first-generation and low-income students and underrepresented minorities — such as women and gender minorities as well as students of color.

However, Chang explained that the University needed a program to increase the number of top STEM students choosing to matriculate to Yale, aligning with the University’s larger priorities of honing its STEM offerings. The University at the time was offering a weekend of recruitment events specifically geared to STEM admits — the Yale Engineering and Science Weekend — but Chang wanted to expand this effort.

“We were losing top STEM students to MIT, Harvard and Stanford even though these students were exposed to YES-W,” Chang wrote in an email to the News. “I knew something more was needed.”

The Hahn program was endowed by and named for Scott Sang-Won Hahn ’94 in 2018. The first class of ten Hahn Scholars arrived in 2019.

For the last two years, five of the 10 selected Hahn Scholars — in the classes of 2025 and 2026 — were Regeneron Science Talent Search Finalists while in high school. The Regeneron STS names the top 40 high school STEM scholars in the country. Before the Hahn program, the University “yielded only 1–2 Regeneron finalists” each year, Chang said.

Hahn Scholars Schweinfurth and Ethan Chiu ’26 both said that the Hahn program was a significant factor in deciding between colleges.

For Schweinfurth, the smaller, tightly-knit community offered by the Hahn Scholar program helped motivate her decision to come to Yale. Having graduated from a high school with a graduating class of 76 students, Schweinfurth said she valued having a small group with which she could share her passion for research.



DANIEL ZHAO/SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

The Hahn Scholarship supports a small cohort of Yale students with research funding.

“A big plus is that it gives you access to Dean Chang’s expertise in research,” said Lucy Zha ’25. “It’s very helpful as it takes away the stress for both the [principal investigators] and the students for finding funding for your projects.”

As a Hahn Scholar, Zha has been involved as a student researcher at the Yale School of Medicine with two different labs. Presently, she is studying the risk factors of long COVID-19 at the Gerstein Lab led by principal investigator Mark Gerstein.

Zha echoed the importance of the program’s community, having found several close friends amongst the Hahn Scholars. Additionally, she emphasized that the program provided her a pathway to continue pursuing research after having been heavily involved in high school.

“My selection as a Hahn Scholar was definitely part of my reason for choosing Yale,” Chiu wrote in an email to the News. “With the oppor-

tunity to conduct paid research during my first-year, I’m able to dive early into exploring groundbreaking research ... I chose the unique opportunity presented through Hahn over some of the other schools/programs I was accepted to.”

While praising the program’s philosophy, Chiu identified aspects that could be improved going forward. His suggestions to make Hahn more appealing to cross-admits included expanded career opportunities, links with biotech and startups and personalized career development.

Chang added that many Hahn Scholars have already published in prestigious scientific journals, and that seniors are gaining admission into top PhD and M.D./PhD programs.

Two of the three Yale students named as Goldwater Scholars are current Hahn seniors. For the next round of Goldwater Scholar awardees, three of the four total juniors nominated are current Hahn juniors.

While programs like STARS seek to increase diversity within STEM fields, the Hahn program is about reaching and recruiting top students. Gender parity, however, is a factor when selecting Hahn Scholars; the program is matched at one to one for gender parity.

Other programs that seek to recruit highly proficient STEM students include the recently-expanded YES Scholars program, which offers guaranteed research funding to a larger pool of STEM admits. The YES program invites about 100 accepted students to join its ranks, with the 10 most proficient named Hahn Scholars.

Admitted students must accept or decline offers of admission by May 1.

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“Being genius is not enough, it takes courage to change people’s hearts.”
DON GREENBOOK

Student hit by vehicle at intersection

BY YASH ROY, MIA CORTES CASTRO
& HANNAH KOTLER
STAFF REPORTERS

A female first-year student was injured in a serious car crash at the intersection of York Street and Elm Street in the early hours of Sunday morning.

Officers and paramedics arrived at the scene at 1:34 a.m. to find her unresponsive, according to a press release from the New Haven Police Department. She was transported to a hospital with serious injuries that “may be life-threatening.” Both drivers who were involved in the accident remained on the scene and are cooperating with the New Haven Police Department’s investigation.

According to the release, the student followed a group of pedestrians who were trying to “beat the light,” stepping into the crosswalk while the light was green for oncoming traffic. The driver of a Toyota Sequoia heading east on Elm Street in the center lane “may have clipped the student.” A second driver, following the Sequoia in a Chevrolet Silverado, then struck down the student in the middle of the street.

First responders spoke to witnesses on the scene, including other pedestrians who had just crossed the roadway, according to the release. Since then, the NHPD’s Crash Reconstruction Team has been investigating the accident.

According to NHPD Chief of Police Karl Jacobson, the NHPD has no additional information to provide beyond the press release that the NHPD sent out on Sunday morning.



TOIA CONDE RODRIGUES DE CONHA/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The 18-year-old student was crossing the intersection during a green light late Saturday night.

Yale Police Department Chief Anthony Campbell told the News that NHPD is responsible for the investigation. Under the Clery Act, YPD is required to report incidents through “timely warning” alerts to the student body in cases involving a range of specific crimes, or when police are investigating areas fre-

quented by students. Campbell did not respond to a request for comment on why a timely warning was not issued for this incident.

Campbell added that YPD has no additional information on the accident. NHPD Chief Jacobson told the News that YPD is “handling all the updates on her condition.” University

Spokesperson Karen Peart directed the News to the NHPD’s press release.

In 2009, a woman was hit by a bus at the same intersection and dragged after her arm was caught under the bus. A Branford first-year student was also seriously injured at the intersection in 2007.

Witnesses can contact the department by calling 203-946-6304.

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Compost program bridges gap between urban and sustainable living

BY NATASHA KHAZZAM
STAFF REPORTER

On any given weekday, you may come across a fleet of cyclists traversing New Haven, transporting bins of composted food scraps from 500 households to farms throughout the city.

These cyclists work for Domingo Medina’s compost program, Peels and Wheels, which he founded in 2014 through a partnership with nonprofit organization New Haven Farms. Peels and Wheels consists of six part-time employees who pick up food scraps from households, schools and businesses on bicycles. Scraps are composted at their facility outside the Phoenix Press Farm in New Haven and the compost is delivered to community gardens and urban farms, where it restores and enriches local soil.

“It’s part of the circular economy,” said Medina. “Food waste should go back to the farmers, it should go back to where it came from originally.”

Although the group now serves hundreds of households in the New Haven area, for Medina, founding Peels and Wheels was not clear-cut. From pursuing conservation efforts in Venezuela to finding a sense of place in New Haven and joining the New Haven Farms initiative, Medina said that he views his journey to creating Peels and Wheels in three phases.

Rainforest Conservation in Venezuela

Medina grew up in Caracas, Venezuela, where he worked for several years on conservation efforts for rainforests across the country, approximately 50 percent of which is covered by primary forest. While working with the Asociación Venezolana para la Conservación de Áreas Naturales, or ACOANA, an environmental nonprofit based in Caracas, Medina learned about the distinction between development and conservation.

“Conservation is a social issue ... it’s a balance,” Medina said. “It’s different from here in the U.S., where we take people out of nature,” he added, referring to the nation’s historical displacement of indigenous groups.

With ACOANA, Medina investigated the impact of ecotourism, advocated for Indigenous rights and developed regional conservation plans in areas throughout the Caura River Rainforest, Kamarata Valley and Amazonas regions of Venezuela. He said he worked alongside indigenous groups including the Ye’kwana, Kamaracoto and Arekuna communities, helping to combat malaria and lack of access to education.

Medina’s work in Venezuela revolved around maintaining the balance between local populations and their surrounding lands. This balance, Medina explained, provided him with



COURTESY OF DOMINGO MEDINA

Domingo Medina spent years cultivating a balance between global communities and the land around them.

a deep-set appreciation for the land around him, planting the seeds of his journey as an environmentalist.

Local climate activist Chris Schweitzer shared a similar perspective about the relationship between land and people. Schweitzer, a program director at the New Haven/Leon Sister City Project, an organization that encourages sustainable development in both New Haven and Nicaragua, explained that even small-scale family gardens can be “a form of economic development and empowerment.”

“A Sense of Place in New Haven”

When Medina moved to New Haven with his family in 1999 after political and economic tensions escalated in Venezuela, he struggled to find a community.

“The city was foreign to me; I didn’t feel grounded in the begin-

ning,” Medina reflected. “But it was working with the Bioregional Group when I really started to find a sense of place here in New Haven.”

In 2008, Medina joined the New Haven Bioregional Group, an organization that seeks to combat climate change and related injustices by encouraging sustainable living and development. According to Medina, the organization took on a futuristic approach to the climate crisis, discussing issues like climate change, resulting economic instability and peak oil — a hypothesis derived from Marlon King Hubbert’s 1956 Peak Theory, which predicted that global crude oil production would hit a maximum before beginning to decline.

“They were talking about this over 15 years ago,” Medina said. “Back when nobody else was talking about it.”

The group’s local focus fostered Medina’s interest in community-oriented environmental efforts.

New Haven Farms

After joining the Bioregional Group, Medina sought to engage in hands-on sustainability efforts alongside New Haven Farms. Founded in 2012, New Haven Farms developed urban farms to teach people with pre-diabetes conditions and diabetes about sustainable strategies to grow and prepare food.

While working for New Haven Farms, Medina noticed that the organization was spending vast sums of money to bring in fertile soil for the farms. In response to this problem, Medina started Peels and Wheels to use food scraps to replenish local soil.

As Peels and Wheels expanded, they broke apart from New Haven

Farms as an independent business in 2014.

Since founding Peels and Wheels, Medina said he strives to contribute to a model he calls “the circular green economy,” which seeks to close the gap between food waste and agriculture through composting.

He highlighted the importance of perceiving food scraps as a resource rather than as a waste. Composting, Medina explained, is among the simplest and most often overlooked strategies to rebuild and maintain organic matter in the soil.

One of Peels and Wheels’ recent projects includes a partnership with Wilbur Cross High School. The school recently began using Peels and Wheels’ services to inform students on sustainable ways to manage food waste. In addition to composting the school’s waste, Medina and his team also provided two informational sessions on the impact of composting.

“Domingo has done a wonderful job breaking down the whole [composting] process for us,” said Lila Kleppner, a student at Wilbur Cross and an intern for the New Haven Climate Movement’s YCAT program. “He is able to show us the whole picture and impact of composting, while also giving us the specific details on how to proceed.”

Medina also emphasized the role of small-scale initiatives in creating long-lasting environmental change, noting that there are 220 nationwide composting services similar to his own.

“In today’s society, we try to have one solution for everything; governments try to centralize resources and attack them through one specific medium,” he said. “But it’s the many small initiatives that will make a greater change than one big one.”

In addition to improving soil health within New Haven, Medina also explained how food waste boosts the local economy. After the Hartford landfill and the incinerator closed in 2015 and in 2022, respectively, Medina claimed that New Haven’s trash is now largely hauled out of state. This change has had fiscal repercussions, leading West Haven’s waste management budget to increase by \$1.5 million. Peels and Wheels aims to reduce the amount of waste the city produces, and consequently, the money it spends on discarding that waste.

“We live in a society where many people are takers,” Medina said. “We have to leave a positive impact on the environment ... we have to become leavers.”

Peels and Wheels’ headquarters are located at 15 James St, New Haven.

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BULLETIN BOARD

GRACE HOPPER COLLEGE TEA

A CONVERSATION WITH

KIN-MAN CHAN

SOCIOLOGIST, SCHOLAR, ACTIVIST

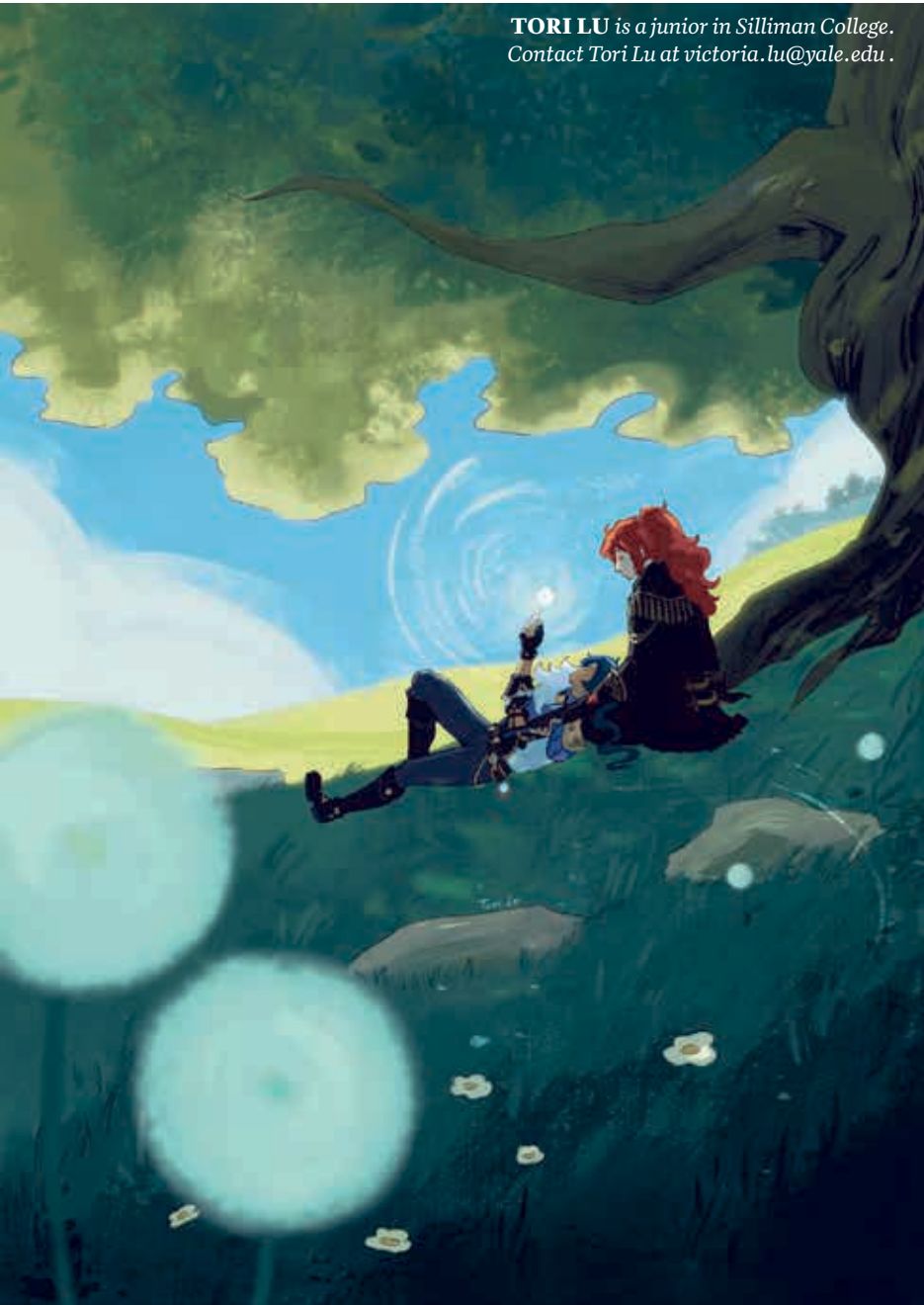
JOIN KIN-MAN CHAN AS HE REFLECTS ON HIS STUDIES AT YALE, HIS WORK ON CHINESE CIVIL SOCIETY, AND HIS ACTIVISM IN HONG KONG. A MEMBER OF HONG KONG'S "OCCUPY TRIO" WHOSE PUBLICATIONS INCLUDE HIS PRISON LETTERS, HE IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT.

Monday, March 6th, 4 pm

Grace Hopper College House

189 Elm Street





THE FRANKE PROGRAM IN SCIENCE AND THE HUMANITIES

presents a screening of

THE LOST LEONARDO

Followed by a Moderated Conversation with

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PROFESSOR EMERITA, THE CONSERVATION CENTER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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Yale

Painting: Sanza Mundi by Leonardo da Vinci



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GYMNASTICS

WALKER SHINES AS YALE PLACES THIRD

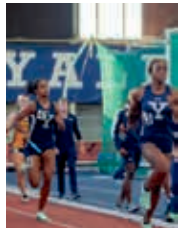
At the Ivy League Classic, Raegan Walker '23 tied the all-time Yale record. However, the team as a whole faltered early on the beam before rallying to finish in third place.



SWIM AND DIVE

ELIS FINISH THIRD AT IVIES

Sophomore Noah Millard set three records at the Ivy League Championships as the Bulldogs finished in third in a strong send-off for this year's class of seniors in their last career Ivy meet. The team now sets their sights on Zonals.



"This was maybe the deepest field in indoor [Ivy Championship] history in both throwing events, and to come out top three in both is something I feel proud of,"

MATT APPEL '24

SHOTPUT & WEIGHT THROWER

Women's Hockey Sweep Harvard

BY SPENCER KING
STAFF REPORTER

The No. 2 Yale women's hockey team (28-2-1, 19-2-1 ECAC) defeated Harvard University (7-21-3, 6-13-3 ECAC) twice this weekend to advance to the ECAC Semifinals.

After defeating the Crimson handily last weekend, the Bulldogs came into the weekend confident, but Harvard proved to be a difficult out when it came to playoffs. The Bulldogs were the only team to sweep their quarterfinal matchup as they won 4-2 and 4-0 against Harvard on Friday and Saturday.

"Last year that was a very talented team and they still are," captain Claire Dalton '23 said.

"For us to take them down, we lost to them in the playoffs two years ago so it's just like a rivalry and then obviously just Yale-Harvard in general is a big thing."

In both the 4-2 victory in game one and then the 4-0 win in the deciding game two, the Bulldogs were led by the strong performances of two players in both the team's offensive and defensive zones.

Forward Grace Lee '24, who entered the weekend with only one goal on the season, exploded onto the scoresheet in a massive way for Yale in the quarterfinal matchup.

Lee emerged as the hero for the Bulldogs after scoring the

SEE WOMEN HOCKEY PAGE 14



MUSCOSPOTSPHOTOS.COM
The Yale women's hockey team defeated Harvard twice this weekend in the best-of-three series to advance to the ECAC Semifinals.

Bulldogs rout Cornell in Men's Basketball



MICHAEL GARMAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Yale kept their Ivy League title hopes alive on Saturday with a dominant win against Cornell thanks to EJ Jarvis '23.

BY BEN RAAB
STAFF REPORTER

With the shot clock winding down on Yale's final possession of the first half, forward EJ Jarvis '23 gathered the ball, half-spun away from his defender and hoisted up a high-arc-ing, deep corner jump shot off his back foot that swooshed perfectly through the net.

It was just that kind of night for Jarvis, who scored 34 points on 13-18 shooting while leading the Bulldogs (19-7, 9-4 Ivy) to a 76-58 rout of the Cornell University Big Red (16-10, 6-7 Ivy) on senior night — the final game of the season on Yale's home court in John J. Lee Amphitheater.

"Tonight was my last game in JLA," Jarvis said. "It feels like home to me, and I wanted to honor that."

The high-scoring performance nearly doubled Jarvis' previous career

high of 18 points and was also the most points scored in a game by a Yale player since Azar Swain '21 scored 37 on Jan. 25, 2022. The Ivy League also named him their "player of the week."

Jarvis' success also meant that the shorthanded Elis stayed ahead of the Big Red by a comfortable margin for most of the night, despite playing without forwards Matt Knowling '24 and Danny Wolf '26 — who were injured and ill respectively.

Cornell started the game strong, going up 9-4 in the opening three minutes, but the Blue and White scored the next seven, with guard John Poulakidas '25's jumper with 14:12 remaining giving them a lead they would never relinquish.

Poulakidas, who became Yale's first 30-point scorer of the season in last week's comeback victory against Princeton University, added 14 points, while fellow sharp-

shooting guard August Mahoney '24 scored 12.

The Big Red — down by more than 20 at times in the second half — threatened a late-game comeback as they went on a 14-3 run to make it 61-50 with 6:40 remaining. However, Jarvis got a layup out of a timeout and made an and-one layup a few possessions later to put the game back out of reach.

"I talked about our depth in the locker room after the game," head coach James Jones said. "We had a lot of guys come in and contribute, and we had EJ have an out-of-body experience to have a great game to lead us. We needed somebody to step up, and it was him. Against Princeton last Saturday, it was John [Poulakidas]. We have a lot of guys that are capable of that."

SEE M BASKETBALL PAGE 14

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Yale crushes Cornell



YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale women's basketball team beat Cornell 63-42 in Ithaca, New York on Saturday.

BY HENRY FRECH
STAFF REPORTER

On Saturday, the Yale women's basketball team (12-14, 6-7) put the beat down on Cornell University (10-16, 3-10) with the final score reading 63-42.

At the start of the game, Christen McCann '25 and Jenna Clark '24 each sank a three pointer to propel the Bulldogs to an 8-0 lead. Cornell called a timeout then got on the board with a two point jumper. For the rest of the quarter, Yale stayed ahead of the Big Red by about three buckets. The frame ended with the Blue and White up 18-13.

"We played together, and really tough," said Avery Lee '25.

Yale grew their lead in the second quarter. With 2:35 left before the halftime buzzer sounded, the Bulldogs were winning by nine points. Brenna McDonald '24 corralled an offensive rebound over the reaching arms of three Cornell players and passed the ball out of the key to McCann Standing wide open in the corner, McCann caught the ball and drilled a three pointer to put the Bulldogs up by 12.

After Cornell called a timeout, Klara Aastroem '24 subbed

SEE WOMEN BBALL PAGE 14

MEN'S SQUASH: Third Place in CSA

BY BETSY GOOD
STAFF REPORTER

This weekend, the Yale men's squash team (10-3, 3-3 Ivy) competed in the College Squash Association Team Championship to close out their team season.

The men competed at Trinity College's George A. Kellner Squash Courts in Hartford, Connecticut. The Bulldogs entered the tournament as the No. 4 seed and finished third in this year's Potter Cup with wins over the University of

Virginia (13-4, 0-0 MASC) and the University of Pennsylvania (16-3, 5-1 Ivy).

"The past weekend proved that we are one of the best teams in the country," assistant coach Tate Miller wrote to the News. "The squash that the men played was absolutely brilliant and all of them should be proud of the teamwork and passion that they displayed, and we will be going into the offseason with plenty of confidence for next season."

The Bulldogs played the Cavaliers back in November

to start Yale's 2022-2023 regular season, beating UVA with the same score of 6-3.

On Saturday, the Bulldogs played in the semifinals against the undefeated No. 1 Harvard University team (16-0, 6-0 Ivy). The Blue and White fell to the Crimson 6-3. There were many close matches against the Crimson, with Brian Leonard '24 and Maxwell Orr '25 both losing their matches with a tight scoreline of 2-3.

SEE MEN'S SQUASH PAGE 10



YALE ATHLETICS

The men's squash team ended their 2022-2023 team season with a third-place finish in the CSA Team Championships.

WEEKEND

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SPISSUE

90 MINUTES OF BEING ME

// BY MADELINE ART

“When I grow up,” I wrote for a first-grade assignment, “I want to be a ballerina.” At this point I was taking one ballet class a week, at a studio 30 minutes south of my house. I loved the routine of this: my mom pulling my hair into a bun and helping me shimmy into my pink tights and baby blue leotard. Each week I silently walked into the studio and stepped into first position, my left hand on the barre.

Every ballet class has the same structure: the first half is at the barre. Your movements grow progressively larger, warming up the different muscles you need to dance. The order of combinations is always the same: pliés, tendus, dégagés, frappés, rond de jambes, fondus, grand battements, adagio.

When you start, the ballet barre is on your left side and your left fingers rest on top of it. Your heels touch and your toes point away from each other. The turnout of your feet should spiral up your legs, so that if you were to draw a line up the front of each leg — from your third toe up your shin and through the center of your thigh — the lines would face away from each other. My teachers always told me to pretend my legs were barbershop poles: energy spiraling upward and outward. This is first position.

The combination for pliés generally doesn’t change at all. Two demi pliés (bend your legs a little) and one grand plié (bend your legs a lot) in each position:

first, second, fourth and fifth. Somewhere around eight, you age out of third position. But the rest hasn’t changed. This is how I started ballet classes at age four; this is how I start ballet classes now.

After pliés, the combinations vary from class to class. The teacher creates a sequence of steps for each exercise, sets it to piano music, and teaches it. You do it on the right side, and then the left side, and then probably never again.

My obsession with ballet took off two years before I wrote this in my first grade class, when my mom and aunts took me to see “The Nutcracker” for the first time. I was four years old and entranced. At the end of Act I, fake snow falls from above the stage while the corps de ballet waltzes below. This is one of my most vivid early memories. I wanted, more than anything, to be onstage.

My chief goal, then, was to be Clara, the show’s young star. Clara receives the titular nutcracker for Christmas and is so enamored that she sneaks back to her living room after dark and sleeps under the Christmas tree, clutching her doll. In my favorite pictures of myself from these years, I’m trying to do the same: curling up in the space between the bottom boughs and the floor, pretending to sleep, and hold-

ing a nutcracker as if it were a stuffed animal. Maybe I was hoping to live out Clara’s storyline — to be transported to the Land of the Sweets. More likely, I was wishing that one



ing a nutcracker as if it were a stuffed animal. Maybe I was hoping to live out Clara’s storyline — to be transported to the Land of the Sweets. More likely, I was wishing that one

ing a nutcracker as if it were a stuffed animal. Maybe I was hoping to live out Clara’s storyline — to be transported to the Land of the Sweets. More likely, I was wishing that one

months, I did. Other than this, I never waived. Flouncing around my house in tutus as a four-year-old became practicing pirouettes as a 10-year-old. By the time I was 12, I was dancing around the house with such abandon that my parents had to institute a new rule: no dancing in the kitchen. Until I was 18, I took class six times per week and rehearsed for hours afterward, until my feet bloodied and my toenails bruised.

At barre, you focus on your technique. Are your knees pulled up? Are your abs engaged? Shoulders down? Arm lifted and sloped? Fingers separated the right amount? The second half of class is called center, and you think about these things then, too. But the theory is this: if you work hard enough at barre, your muscles will know what to do when you get to center. Then, you can focus on coordinating more challenging movements. Center is where you turn and waltz and fly across the studio. Center is where you dance.

I don’t know when I stopped saying that I wanted to be a ballerina. I don’t remember ever feeling faced with a decision: I knew I wanted to go to college, and I knew it wouldn’t be for dance. I dance for fun now. I’m far too old to dream of professional ballet — often, you have to set on that path by 15. I don’t

think I’ve made a mistake. But it’s hard to shake the feeling, tugging deep in my chest, that I’ve lost touch with who I was and who I wanted to be.

A ballet class is a warm up: by the end, your body is ready for a rehearsal, when you learn choreography. Class is where you improve, too. Ballet doesn’t have an end point — you can always be better.

But classes are rituals, too. Even the best dancers in the world take class every single morning, for their entire careers. These days, this ritual restores that connection with my childhood self. Every version of me has done pliés followed by tendus and rond de jambes and has carried my arms through the same pathways. Every version of me has tried to turn faster and has felt the strain in my back from pushing my arabesque higher.

The longest I’ve ever gone without a class was 13 months, during my gap year. The second longest was three months, this past summer. If I took three days off when I danced seriously, I’d come back feeling like my body didn’t quite fit together. My standards are lower these days. I peaked at 17; I won’t ever be that dancer again. Ballet class is no longer 90 minutes of trying to fix what’s out of place. It’s 90 minutes of remembering how it feels to be me.

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COOTIES, COVID, AND COMING OF AGE

// BY ELIZA JOSEPHSON

In today’s day and age, the least likely place to administer vaccine doses is perched on top of monkey bars or beside a swing set. But that’s where the real protective medicine got doled out toward the end of elementary school. This was a world before masks or face shields, before we knew about Pfizer and Moderna. This was a world where the most harrowing invisible threat was never deadly. To protect my friends, I’d start moving my index finger in circular motions on their forearms while we’d chant:

Circle, circle, dot. Now you have the cootie shot!

Before the Yague, there was the OG — opposite gender — plague. The annual shots you got at the pediatrician’s office and the dinosaur band-aid you wore as a consolation prize didn’t prevent cooties. Be careful, this playground epidemic could spread to anyone.

Consider a check-up if your symptoms include a racing heartbeat, sweaty palms, and a general feeling somewhere at the intersection of anticipation, repulsion, and curiosity. Outbreaks of the contagion occur when you’re in the vicinity of

the opposite gender. If you physically come into contact with them in some way? If you hold their hand in gym class during the parachute unit, for instance? You’re screwed. If you don’t have the cootie shot, there’s no remedy for your ailment.

Cooties embody quintessential preteen awkwardness. They’re a stand-in for the unknown variables that come with a girl talking to a boy, and vice versa. Very heteronormative, but I’ll be honest, this malady wasn’t always related to romance. The cooties excuse was useful when you didn’t want to be near the boy who got muddy during recess or the girl who wore too much of her mother’s perfume.

Most generations get to grow up and grow out of cooties naturally. As the years pass and hormones begin to rage, fear of interacting with the opposite gender fades. Teenagehood marks an inauguration into dating culture where the only threats young adults have to avoid are STDs.

But when the pandemic struck, a sizable portion of Generation Z never fully completed this important stage of social development. Tumbleweeds rolled across a barren and

deserted adolescent playground. Sure, we’ve left plastic slides in the dust, and moved on to red Solo cup socialization. But the time we spent at home during remote learning left many of us missing that in-between.

We weren’t given the space or time for casual exposure therapy to things like cooties. We had to stay six feet apart at all times. Social distancing became more than just a pure physical boundary. At precisely the time when we were supposed to realize cooties were nothing more than immature, self-imposed borders between genders, we lost access to that potential closeness.

After recess became study hall, playdates didn’t evolve into date-dates. People our age spent less time loitering in mall food courts and shared less popcorn in dim movie theaters. We didn’t slow-dance at prom or sneak out for late-night rendezvous while we were trying to stop the spread. It was hard to make inconspicuous eye contact with our hallway crushes over Zoom.

Enter college. Just as restrictions began to ease and normalcy was on the horizon, teen-

agers got dropped onto college campuses — already places of accelerated social learning. With full vaccine cards and wide eyed excitement, Yale seemed like the place to confront this gender tension once and for all. And anyway, should 18 year olds really be worried about something as silly and abstract as cooties, independent or dependent of COVID?

Yes. I’m concerned about what they represent. Teens lost crucial time that was meant to be spent developing immunity to cooties. Reintegrating into college level social dynamics was made even more difficult after prolonged periods of high school isolation. The first couple of parties I attended post-quarantine had awkwardness thick in the air. Conversation was stilted and tense, if present at all. It almost felt like people had forgotten how to interact with the opposite gender, and we’d reverted back to a time when arbitrary excuses like cooties thinly veiled our fears about growing up.

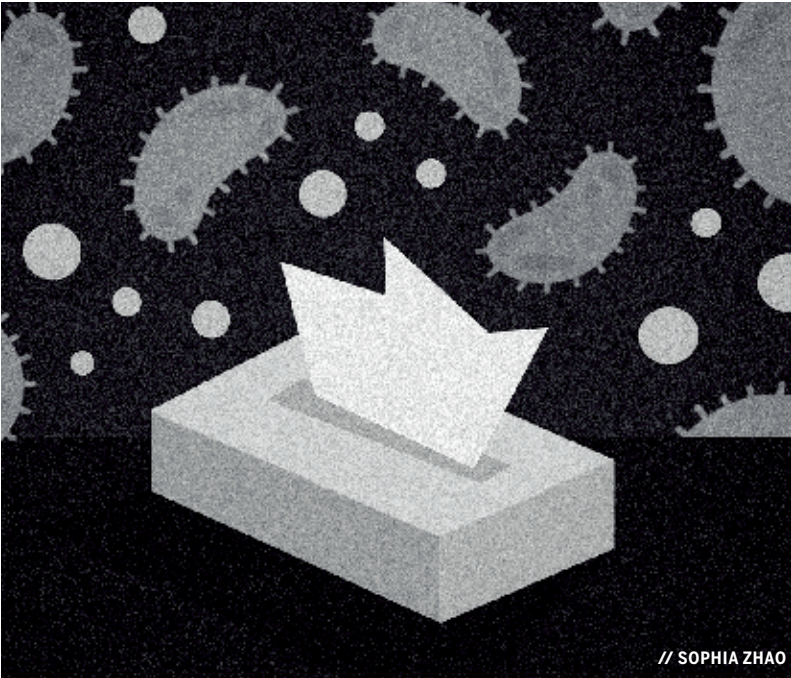
Whether we like it or not, college is where we have to rediscover being social. And we can’t show interest like we used to.

It’s no longer socially appropriate to chase someone through sprinklers or to tug on someone’s pigtailed. So, how can we display attraction without fear of catching cooties? How can we adequately protect ourselves?

I’m no CDC official, but I’m certain no booster exists in addition to the original circle-dot-dot shot. Without having the time and space to develop herd immunity against the opposite gender plague, I recommend we fearlessly face cooties here and now. It’s as good a time as any to build up our immune systems by engaging in new experiences with people of other genders.

We’re old enough to not need protection from the realities of potential relationships, whether they be romantic, sexual, or purely platonic. As I see it, the grossness of cooties spreading on the playground has transformed into the exciting promise of forging new kinds of bonds on campus. If I get to experience everything I missed out on, I’m finally ready to risk catching cooties. You should be, too.

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// SOPHIA ZHAO

WKND Recommends

Taking ballet classes.

Obit on tweendom,
via my middle school
iPad journal entries

// BY MIRANDA WOLLEN

1/31/14:
I feel like I'm walking on air. You know how I was worried that... he didn't want to go to the dance with me? Well, today in the panini line Joseph SB was like "Hey Alexander and Miranda you two are going to the dance together, right?" And I looked at him and he was like "Yeah" so I was like "Yeah" too, Yay!

In sixth grade, I wore a palate expander clogged with the fruits of said panini line incident. The Downtown Independent Schools Consortium dance loomed; I spent my allowance on a lace cut-out A-Line dress from Lester's and wrote that I felt "smokin'" in it. I holstered a hot pink iPhone 5C in ill-fitting Forever 21 leggings. My boyfriend (generous use of the term) and I spoke mainly on Mine-craft Survival Games servers.

I had three hamsters in rapid succession. My first one died of an oft-ignored rodent disease called "there was a cancerous tumor in his left asscheek," and my parents secretly paid \$300 to have him euth-anized (RIP Hamilton.)

4/8/14:
I have a burn on both of my lips from my straightening iron. I hit myself while it was on, and it HURT. However, I proceeded to tell everyone who asked it was a hickey. Less embarrassing...

I straightened my hair every day. It smelled like smoke and apple-scented chemicals. I stayed up until midnight in a four-post twin bed bedecked with strands of finger-woven string to listen to Taylor Swift's "1989." I made my poor music teacher teach me every song on the album, unwilling to admit that saccharine dance pop didn't translate seamlessly to my level of acoustic guitar skill. Also, I wrote my own songs, because of course I wrote my own songs.

I played an Oompa Loompa in a middle-school rendition of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," and when the aforementioned Alexander came to watch with his mother, I was so embarrassed to be seen by them that I mistakenly threw a fun-sized piece of chocolate directly at her face. In my defense, my costume was a hazmat suit and a shower cap that did not make me feel fun-sized.

1/15/14
I'm going to read this in twenty years and have no idea what I'm talking about. HI 31 YEAR OLD ME! Are you married to a male supermodel yet? How about that whole president of the world thing? Ok but I hope you went to a good college, have a good job, and have a nice husband.

I bought my first bra and tried estimating the calories in sliced turkey. I watched "Glee" under the covers on an iPod Touch. I downloaded apps that gave me special fonts for my Instagram captions. I made my mom read poems I'd written with names like "Happiness" and "Contemplations about the Sea," which I cannot bring myself to record publicly here. I insisted on learning the Christmas dance from "Mean Girls." My first kiss was behind a volleyball court with a 4'11" boy from Jersey. I owned, and wore, a graphic muscle tee that featured a cat wearing the Unabomber's mugshot outfit (???)

I got my first period in the bathroom of the girls' locker room and cried when my mother told my father about it. I kept a signed photograph of Daniel Radcliffe in my desk drawer and yelled at everyone who told me he was 5'5". I tried to convince myself that I liked playing "Halo" and talked loudly in front of Cute Boys' lockers about how much I loved playing "Halo." I pondered the mid-dling ranking I received on a "hot or not" list those same Cute Boys made and despised the girls who beat me.



// ARIANE DE GENNARO

I secretly printed out a copy of the A.A. Milne poem my mother used to read to me when I couldn't fall asleep and took it to summer camp.

The pain and the sweetness of tweendom is in its sincerity. The onset of the self-awareness and critical thinking skills that accompany (for some of us; I am still waiting) later teenagedom is slow, and the passing

years are hilarious and sad. I want to drop-kick 12-year-old me, and I want to give her the biggest hug I've ever given. I also want to give her a tutorial on how to insert a tampon. Without her I would have no sense of humor, and during her heyday she was the kind of salami-breathed, over-eyed-lined, off-putting little weirdo that I would hate to babysit now.

Rest In Peace, middle school Miranda. I hope that wherever you are is full of BuzzFeed videos and tankinis, and that you're hanging out with Ass Cancer Hamilton.
Love you; please God never come back.

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Nostalgia Rankings: Disney Princess Movies

// BY ABBY ASMUTH

When I was a kid, for six straight months, I dressed as "Ariel Pink" (what I used to call Ariel in her pink dress from "The Little Mermaid") every day. And not just for dress-up — I wore my "Ariel Pink" dress to preschool, restaurants and even to sleep. I wore it so often that my parents had to buy me a second one. As that obsession subsided, in came my love affair with "Sleeping Beauty's" Aurora. And when I wasn't a princess, I was one of their sidekicks. My older sister and I recreated Disney movies in our basement, with her playing the princess, and me playing every other character.

My sister and I were practically raised on the Disney Princess franchise. They were our role models, everything we dreamed of being. While neither of us became an actual princess (unfortunately), the imagination these films inspired in us undoubtedly impacted the creative people we've both become. These films continue to hold a special, nos-

talgic place in my heart. So here are my incredibly biased rankings of this iconic franchise:

15. **Brave (2012)**

I saw it once when it came out and honestly don't remember what happened — just that I was bored.

14. **Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs (1937)**

As the first Disney Princess movie, it's the blueprint, the first draft and, honestly, has a ways to go. The animation is gorgeous, but the plot is forgettable. Plus, down to his awful name, Prince Florian is the least appealing Disney Prince. And yes, apparently Charming is not his real name.

13. **Pocahontas (1995)**

The music: superb. The story: not so much... the source material is grossly mishandled.

12. **Sleeping Beauty (1959)**

Similar to "Snow White," the animation is pretty, but the plot is lacking. At least it has humorous

side characters and better music. And Philip is a major upgrade from Florian. But given Aurora is only in 18 minutes of the movie, it honestly barely qualifies as a Disney Princess film.

11. **Cinderella (1950)**

This time, the princess is actually the main character! With catchy tunes and arguably the most iconic fairy tale plot, "Cinderella" is my favorite of the classic Disney Princess movies. Cinderella herself is a little bland, but the film remains a solid installment to the franchise.

10. **Aladdin (1992)**

Robin Williams! The humor is positively on point. The medium of animation is used to perfection when it comes to the genie and the flying carpet. But once more, the film is more about the would-be prince — and Robin Williams — than the princess. And let's not forget that Aladdin — while charming — massively lied to Jasmine.

9. **Thumbelina (1991)**

Chronically underappreciated, Thumbelina only recently became a Disney princess with Disney's acquisition of 20th Century. (I love this movie so I made the executive decision to include it.) The animation is positively stunning, and the soundtrack is lovely. My sister and I agree the plot is bizarre at times, but endearing nonetheless.

8. **Frozen (2013)**

Though it quickly became overplayed, "Frozen" remains a solid addition to the franchise. The story of the sisters is heartwarming, and the score is catchy. While Disney's "twist villain" has by now been

overdone, at the time, Hans' villainy was a shocking and engaging reveal.

7. **Mulan (1998)**

Female empowerment at its finest. Plus, a fantastic soundtrack with the Lea Salonga.

6. **The Little Mermaid (1989)**

"The Little Mermaid" hits all the beats of the formulaic princess film: a fun gimmick (mermaids), an admirable heroine, a handsome prince and an iconic soundtrack. There's nothing especially unique, but it does what it sets out to do so well.

5. **Tangled (2010)**

A great retelling of a classic tale with a nice underlying message about chasing your dreams and being unafraid to discover new ones. Rapunzel is adorable and tenacious. Flynn Rider is everything you could want in a Disney prince — or rather, thief. To top it all off, they're voiced by two of my favorite actors, Mandy Moore and Zachary Levi, respectively.

4. **Moana (2016)**

Surprisingly — yet unsurprisingly — Moana is the only Disney princess on this list without a romantic interest. Moana is fierce, persistent, well-rounded and beautifully independent. The story is rich with ancient Polynesian culture, which Disney actually took care to research this time. Moana engrosses you with its gorgeous animation, laugh-out loud moments and sweeping soundtrack.

3. **Beauty & the Beast (1991)**

One of Disney's best heroines, Belle is intelligent, generous and loving. She's a true role model to young audiences. The Beast is a solid love interest, and Gaston is positively comical — and apparently based off

of screenwriter Linda Woolverton's ex, which adds a whole other layer of hilarity for me. There's a certain charm to this film and to Woolverton's script that gives it the number three spot on my list.

2. **Anastasia (1997)**

Another recent 20th Century acquisition, "Anastasia" was actually developed to replicate and rival the Disney princess franchise. Well, it definitely succeeded, earning the number two spot on my list. Anastasia/Anyia is an unforgettable character: she's stubborn, scrappy and has loads of spunk. Her relationship with Dmitri is the best enemies-to-lovers arc to ever grace the animated screen. The backdrop of 20th century Russia — while absolutely historically inaccurate — gives depth, suspense and intrigue to the film. If you weren't fortunate enough to have this film be part of your childhood, it's a must-watch.

1. **The Princess & The Frog (2009)**

Tiana is sensational. Hardworking, kind, giving, empathetic. She's a great role model for young girls, and her story conveys an important message — the best of the Disney Princess collection — about the value of hard work. Plus, Naveen executes the guy-falls-first trope to perfection. The soundtrack is amazing. Sadly, "The Princess & The Frog" stands as the last 2D animation film of the franchise (with "Tangled" and "Moana" using 3D animation). But the medium is used beautifully to tell Tiana's tale.

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WKND Recommends

Cocaine Bear.

Guess How Much I Love You

// BY MAYA ASHABOGLU

“Mommy, when are we going to return Mina to the hospital?” Apparently, that’s what I asked my mother after a month of having my younger sister, Mina, in the house. In my defense — besides the fact that I was a two-and-a-half-year-old — I thought the sudden appearance of our family’s fourth member would mean I’d have someone to play dress up with. Nobody told me that she would move into my room only to sleep, get breastfed and cry.

Looking back, I feel like I needed time to adjust, but my family always talks about the affectionate older sister I was: never jealous and always kind. I’m not sure Mina would quite agree, but isn’t disagreement what siblings are for?

As I assumed my role as the elder sister, I had to accept there would be some changes in my well-organized life as a three-year-old. I started going to nursery school; I was kicked out of my own room; daily activities were planned according to Mina’s nap schedule; people were always more excited to see the baby.

With time, even our night routines had to undergo some adjustments. I wasn’t particularly fond of them, but I still got to listen to bedtime stories and I knew this privilege would be revoked if I complained. I did, however, have to go to Mina’s room to listen to my mother collectively read us “Guess How Much I Love You.” I wanted to speed through the pages I knew by heart — “I love you as high as I can reach!” “I love you across the river and over the hills!” — but we had to wait for Mina to examine the illustrations of

the “Little Nutbrown Hare” which were still very new to her. My mother then sang Mina songs until she fell asleep in her arms. I had to get used to receiving one armed hugs and putting myself to bed.

I think another issue was that my competitive side wasn’t really subdued; I couldn’t exactly grasp the fact that we were at different ages and skill levels. Whenever my father tried to record Mina standing in front of a wall for the first time, I’d run up to the wall and show the camera how well I could walk. Likewise, I wanted to be the one praised for wearing the cute pink dress my mother picked out for me. But I wasn’t the only child in the family anymore.

Growing up arguing over anything and everything — would we bake cookies or cupcakes, who would get to wear the blue sweater, whether we should watch “Dora the Explorer” or “Mickey Mouse” — there were definitely times we found each other unbearable. I thought she was never able to get the dance choreography right; she, on the other hand, found me to be too bossy. Yet somehow, as years went by, all the absurd quarrels were what brought us closer together. Turns out, we needed a few conflicts to fully appreciate each other.

As she got older, and was able to do more than giggle to my variation of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,” I began to see her more as a friend. When summer came, I could be the one to make sure she put on sunscreen; when it was winter, I could teach her how to get back up after falling while skiing. I loved



// CATE ROSER

seeing her in my hand-me-downs, showing her all of my favorite hair styles and beloved hair clips, drawing portraits of her, teaching her the notes on my piano and even reading to her as I began to learn how to read myself. Now I could be the one to love her “right up to the moon — and back.”

The adjustments took time but helped me realize I enjoyed growing up. All of a sudden, I noticed I had a lot I wanted to share with her. Love, joy, curiosity, frustration, anxiety, sadness... She slowly became the outlet for all of my emotions. When I wanted someone to join me in a game of Uno, she was there. When I needed some-

one to rant to about an argument I had with one of our parents that day, she was there. When I found the answers to my never-ending questions at school and wanted someone to tell them to, she was there. The potential of sharing was limitless: borrowing sweaters, making to-do lists, getting each other coffee, sharing class notes from previous years... the list goes on and on. I realized life is much more enjoyable when you always have a companion with you — one you can’t get rid of, even if you want to at times. Even with the most trivial conflicts, we were always there to listen, annoy each other and then eventually solve the problem at hand. If my only worry

was that I was bored of studying and wanted to sit on the floor of her room for a while, I knew my best friend was there for me in the next room.

It’s weird growing up with a sister. Normally, you get to choose the people you want to spend time with. In the case of siblings, the universe (and your parents) makes the decision for you. Adjusting to it, figuring out the disagreement of sisterhood brings life meaning, definitely has a learning curve. But once you get there, it makes you feel like the luckiest person on the planet.

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Once Upon a Hopeless Romantic’s Dream



// MADEEHA HASSAN

“I know you, I walked with you once upon a dreeeeaaaaa- mmm.”

My four-year-old self wandered around the playroom at St. Mary’s preschool, trailing closely behind her oblivious Prince Charming. When he didn’t acknowledge me, I decided to sing louder. “I KNOOOOW YOUUU, THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYEEES IS SOOOO FAMILIAR A GLEE-AAAMMM.”

He kept walking. He wasn’t intentionally ignoring me; of this I was certain. In my mind, it

was a cold hard fact that I would grow up, become a princess, and marry Tory, the boy who sat next to me at the arts and crafts table.

We were perfect for each other for a variety of reasons, the most prominent being our shared fear of the Toy Taker from the low-budget Rudolph sequel, “Rudolph and the Toy Taker.” It was because of this that there was no one I liked more than Tory — except maybe his best friend, Gavin. Neither of them realized it, but we were in a complex love triangle for a while, until I saw Gavin pick his

nose and eat one of his boogers. Then my mind was made up.

The playroom at St. Mary’s was my favorite place in the entire world, because it had a plastic castle that you could climb inside and stand on top of. It took me years to realize the reason I loved it so much: it was the perfect place for my preschool self to act out all of her deepest romantic fantasies. I would stand at the top of the castle and yell: “My prince, come save me!” And then Tory would run over to the castle and sweep me off my feet as much as any four-year-old could.

// BY HANNAH KURCZESKI

If you had asked me back then, I would’ve insisted that what I felt for Tory was more than just a crush. We were co-parents of Arnold the plastic caterpillar, after all. I even have a vague memory of us maybe accidentally kissing while trying to hug each other goodbye on Valentine’s Day, but there’s a strong possibility that my preschool imagination made that up.

My feelings for Tory began to fade when one day, on his way to rescue me from the tower, he tripped and fell on the playroom tile. I remember standing at the top of the castle, watching him cry as our teachers ran to care for him, and all I could think was, “that wasn’t very princely. How dare he leave me alone, stranded in the castle.” I thought that the real prince charming would have just picked himself up and finished his rescue mission. The real prince charming would never have tripped in the first place.

Unsurprisingly, Tory and I fell out of contact shortly after preschool graduation, and our whirlwind romance seemed to end as quickly as it had begun. I forgot about him for the most part, but my mom loves to bring him up from time to time and show me photos of him that his mom posts on Facebook. “Remember Tory, your preschool love?” she laughs. “Look how tall he is now!”

I don’t think I’ve seen Tory in person since preschool, so he exists in my world as nothing but a cringe-worthy memory. Still, I can’t help but wonder how much that first crush has influenced my love life today. Why do so many of the guys I’ve liked have that same light-brownish-blond hair that he had? Do I have a type? Did

he create my type, or did he just happen to fall into it? And what about my flirting skills? I’d like to think that I’ve grown, but would I still follow my crush around singing Disney love songs to attract them? (I fear the answer might be yes...)

Or maybe none of this is poor Tory’s fault. The truth is, I’ve been a hopeless romantic all my life. Growing up has meant realizing that I went through a Scooby Doo phase not because I cared about the mysteries they had to solve, but because I wanted Daphne and Fred to get together. I had a Wall-E-themed sixth birthday party, but only because I shipped him and Eve. Even now, I find that all of my favorite songs and movies have something to do with love.

I suppose it’s not fair of me to blame my first crush for my current romantic struggles. Four-year-old Tory is not the reason that I have unrealistic standards and can’t read a book without a good romantic subplot. It’s my own fault that I expect everything in life to work out the way it does in the movies.

But Tory, if you’re reading this, just know that your preschool girlfriend is still here, waiting to be rescued from her plastic castle.

There’s something so romantic about what’s left unsaid. And, what even is the point of a holiday dedicated to restating how you feel? Valentines is otherwise an excuse for romance — showcasing reluctance — an unfortunate symptom of a holiday dedicated to being vulnerable. So, next year, I hope to reconnect with my childish vulnerabilities and say I love you to everyone.

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WKND Hot Take:
Abolish spring break.