

Conflict in the Caucasus

Armenia and Azerbaijan spar over disputed territory

Megan Schmitz '21
 Staff Writer

In the wake of empires, territories with previously undefined boundaries have historically undergone demarcation and incorporation into a larger sovereign state. Where the wishes of inhabitants of that territory have not received consideration, this consolidation has resulted in conflicting national narratives. The citizens of the larger state regard the territory as rightfully their own while those within the territory deem themselves, and, by extent, their land, as not consensually held. Such is the case in the Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh, wherein on October 4, Armenian missiles allegedly struck Ganja, a populous Azerbaijani city.

Ethnically Armenian and ruled autonomously, residents of Nagorno-Karabakh have long sought annexation into Armenia, an alteration which they understand as independence but which the Azerbaijani government perceives as Armenia infringing upon their territorial integrity. As of September, this difference in understanding has escalated into missile warfare, with both sides mobilizing their armed forces. Because both parties have cultivated contrary national narratives around the dispute, in the absence of an agreement regarding ownership of the territory, neither can relinquish their claim without appearing unprincipled and weak willed.

Though the possession of Nagorno-Karabakh has long been contentious, tensions reached a critical point on September 27 as either Azerbaijan or Armenia fired shots over the two countries' shared border. Since that incident, both sides have portrayed the other as the violent aggressor while engaging in battles that have killed hundreds of people, including at least forty civilians. Because Armenia has long martially and politically controlled the region, the Azerbaijani government effectively has the offensive position in the conflict. However, located far within Azer-

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baijan's territory, Nagorno-Karabakh is officially considered by all states as under Azerbaijani jurisdiction, including by the Armenian government.

Numerous alleged missile strikes on Azerbaijani cities outside of the contested area further obfuscate blame for the intensifying violence. Along with the alleged attack on Ganja, Azerbaijan claims that the Armenian military struck the regions of Tartar, Fuzuli, and Jabrayil on October 4, killing at least one civilian and injuring thirty-two others. That evening, Armenian missiles

also reportedly bombarded the city of Mingachevir, which holds a water reservoir and electricity plant serving more than a million Azerbaijanis. While Armenian officials dispute these allegations, the Azerbaijani government has released footage of blazing, crumbling buildings in Ganja. The day prior, Armenia asserted that Azerbaijan fired missiles at Stepanakert and Martakert, two cities within Nagorno-Karabakh, specifically targeting a bus transporting Armenian and Russian journalists. With the two countries allegedly striking the other's citizens, both sides portray their violence as responding to like violence and therefore as justified.

In addition to allegations of exacerbating tensions, Armenia and Azerbaijan each accuse the other of receiving illicit foreign support. As both countries were formerly under the control of the Soviet Union, Russia often mediates their conflicts, most notably bringing an end to an attempted secession by the Nagorno-Karabakh region from Azerbaijan in 1994. Having an official alliance with Armenia, Russia nevertheless supplies arms to forces on both sides of the conflict. Despite this seeming impartiality, the Azerbaijani government remains skeptical of Russia's involvement, for the nation has historically favored Armenia when resolving disputes. For example, during that 1994 negotiation, Russia ceded the contested region to Armenia, a move not considered legitimate



Allies Azerbaijani President Aliyev and Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan holding a joint press conference on tensions with Armenia. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

by any country, including Armenia. In addition to Russia, Turkey has become involved in the most recent conflict, proclaiming its support for Azerbaijan and corroborating the country's narrative of the conflict as a reclamation of illegally-occupied territory.

Recognizing that Russia and Turkey are currently engaged in two other proxy-wars in Syria and Libya, both the Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister have regarded the other party's suspected or blatant alliance with suspicion. Hence, when The Guardian reported the presence of Syrian soldiers in Nagorno-Karabakh on October 1, each side assigned responsibility to the other's ally. An earlier Guardian article from September 28 detailed how Turkish security firms hired Syrians on behalf of the Turkish government to bolster Azerbaijani forces, a story affirmed by French President Emmanuel Macron on October 1. Based on French intelligence, President Macron claimed Turk-

ish businesses had paid 300 "jihadist fighters" to fight for Azerbaijan. In response to these allegations, Azerbaijan has purported that Armenia incorporated militants into its forces from the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), a recognized terrorist group in Syria and Iraq. By portraying the other country as collaborating with illicit agents, Azerbaijan and Armenia can each claim the other side to be immoral, thereby ennobling their participation in the conflict.

In their dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia believe and propagate contradictory truths regarding both details of the fighting and its source. Because the two states conceive of their respective roles in the conflict as that of liberators, neither side can definitively relinquish their claim without seeming ideologically weak. The conflict thus wages on; only time will reveal which narrative, that of Azerbaijan or Armenia, will emerge from the fallout.

Madeira Welcomes New Teachers

Meet the newest members of the Madeira community

Lilly Tanenbaum '21
 Staff Writer

Madeira has welcomed many new staff and faculty members this year, including eight new teachers. These teachers all bring their unique experiences and skills to the Madeira community. There are new teachers in many different departments, including Math, Science, History, World Languages, and the Arts. Even as new social distancing regulations and virtual classes separate people physically, these teachers are becoming an important

part of the Madeira community.

The Science department welcomed Ms. Saville-Andree and Mr. Koch. It was also joined by Dr. Walker, who previously taught in the Math department. Before joining the Madeira community, Ms. Saville-Andree taught high school science in Bradenton, Florida. She spent much of her summer "planning and executing the move from Florida to Virginia," but also devoted time to her gardening hobby. In the coming year, Ms. Saville-Andree is "excited to meet the students and experience the full Madeira

community experience." The other new addition, Mr. Koch, was "a graduate student in physics at the University of Maryland," where he "studied quantum chaos in networks." During quarantine and social distancing, he has enjoyed playing video games with friends, which he says are "a natural fit for the virtual environment." He also enjoyed "solitary hobbies," such as hiking and photography. In the coming school year, he hopes to "help students get a feel for the world we live in while all the odds are stacked against us" in these "surreal circumstances."

"These teachers all bring their unique experiences and skills to the Madeira community."

The World Languages department was joined by Mr. Poyac, who teaches French. Before coming to Madeira, Mr. Poyac worked for 14 years at a school nearby in Alexandria, VA. He then worked at the For-

eign Language Institute, which teaches languages to people who work at U.S. embassies. Mr. Poyac worked with employees who were "scheduled to be stationed in French speaking countries." Outside of school, Mr. Poyac is a soccer coach. In the age of social distancing, Mr. Poyac has spent his time with his 2 sons. He also enjoys various other hobbies including cooking, gardening, and biking. In the coming school year, Mr. Poyac is excited to bring his love for French language and culture to the Madeira community.

The Math department has two new teachers this year, welcoming both Mr. Mallari and Mr. Wallace. Before coming to Madeira, Mr. Mallari taught courses in math at The Calverton School. He enjoys teaching both math and coding. During quarantine, he enjoyed spending time with his wife "reading scriptures together and binge-watching Filipino movies, Korean novels, and Netflix shows." As the Madeira community begins in person

classes, Mr. Mallari is "excited to meet and teach talented and exemplary students" who "will be making positive changes in our world." The Madeira community is also excited to get to know the Math department's other newest member, Mr. Wallace.

The English department gained one new teacher this year, welcoming Ms. Alston to the school. Before coming to Madeira, Ms. Alston lived in Philadelphia, PA. During coronavirus, she has enjoyed "watching international movies, baking cobblers, and gardening." She is looking forward to the coming year, especially "the topics she will be covering in class" and the prospect of "getting to know the North Dorm boarders!"

As the Madeira community transitions between virtual and in-person learning and adjusts to a new way of life in a pandemic, all are excited to welcome new teachers. They will all bring their unique talents and perspectives to the school, and we are lucky to have them!



Ms. Saville-Andree and Ms. Segree. Photos courtesy of Ms. Zahradnik.



Though it is not often noted, it is highly interesting to me to examine the numerous connections between Christianity and socialism. Though these connections are highly relevant today, as many on the religious right overlook the anti-rich and socialist sentiments that are prevalent throughout the New Testament and instead favor reducing support for the poor, there are also many historical connections between the two ideologies.

Notably, the Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels cites that “Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a socialist tinge,” asking “Has not Christianity declaimed against private property, against marriage, against the State? Has it not preached in place of these, charity and poverty. . .?” One begins to see, then, that significant moral and societal principles are shared between Christianity and socialism, as both call for caring for the poor, living modestly, and removing unjust hierarchy.

In the Bible itself, such philosophies are prominent, as readers are urged to renounce worldly possessions and care for others. Books such as James

bring this notion to light, as it states “Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.” (James 5:4 RSV).

These ideas are clear in many other books of the New Testament, as notions of relinquishing material possessions, treating the rich and poor equally, calling out institutional hypocrisy, the explicit immorality of being wealthy (Matthew 19:24), and the meaninglessness of faith without works—among others—are expounded on. Such notions mirror the socialist values of creating an equitable society where all can live comfortably and without exploitation from the upper classes.

In connection with these Christian and socialist principles, medieval monastic sects such as the Franciscans and the Dulcinians sought to adhere more consistently to Biblical precepts and thus established values of a modest lifestyle grounded in contribution to the community. Though socialist ideology had not yet been entirely conceptualized, these groups valued many of the same principles as socialism later would, such as eliminating hierarchies and renouncing private property.

Many principles are held in common between Christianity and socialism, as both call for more equitable distribution of assets and for valuing individuals over making profits. Whether or not one agrees with this conclu-

sion, it is important to consider the connections between these two ideologies, as both are frequent topics of conversation. The two share a myriad of similarities,



often professing the same principles, as becomes clear upon examination. Most of us are taught a simple lesson from a young age: in order to lead a happy life, we must be kind. From fairy tales to children’s movies, the media we grew up consuming drilled a message of goodness and selflessness into us. To be good is to be kind, and it must be easy to be kind — after all, is it not true that everlasting kindness triumphs above all else? Even when life goes awry, the stories promise that pureness of heart guarantees the ‘happily ever after’ that we each seek.

This instruction seems flawless in theory — yet the execution is always lacking. We find, as we age, that there is too much unnoticed cruelty; the fairy tales of which we set off to be the heroes almost always leave villains unpunished. In the face of this discovery, we as both a society and as individuals create a defense mechanism: reject the learned kindness. Reject compassion for others, the desire to understand, reject what every story has taught. After all, those are fiction; in reality, kindness is weakness.

I ask us now to forget that defense, and I ask us to believe that kindness is strength. For in this world of cruelty that we have discovered, kindness that perseveres has stood through evil and cruelty and remained incorrupt.

The source of our confusion is our inability to reconcile kindness and courage. In our corrupted understanding, selflessness is deference and therefore cowardice — yet courage is inseparable from kindness. In being kind, we maintain our compassion even through rejection of individuals’ cruelty. Standing one’s ground when challenged is an inarguable display of strength, and that is all that remaining kind is. To counter disagreement: is it not weakness to abandon kindness when the world needs it most? Is it not weakness to consider goodness and label it as pathetic out of one’s own fear?

Kindness cannot be situational. It is having faith in goodness; it is giving freely to others and believing that, until proven otherwise, they are deserving of that compassion. Maintaining kindness in the face of cruelty is the most powerful example of

courage, and, as the world around us grows only more hostile, it is the courage that we need the most.



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The Impact of George Floyd’s Murder

How the killing of George Floyd sparked conversation and change

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The brutal killing of George Floyd in May sent shock waves across the black community and mainstream media. This was not the first time an innocent black man had been brutally murdered at the hands of power-hungry and agitated police officers, but Floyd’s death was different. It sparked uproar and opened the eyes of many, demonstrating inarguable proof of America’s systemic perpetration of brutal injustices against black people.

George Floyd’s tragic murder tainted America’s history with an ugly mark on this country’s allegedly fair and equal criminal justice system. A look at the facts demonstrates the many positive changes that his brutal murder inspired. Polls from Civiqs show that, since his death, 15% more registered voters currently support the Black Lives Matter movement, as compared to a 2017 poll the organization conducted. A recent AP-NORC poll showed that the percentage of Americans in support of the protests has increased to 52%, a stark contrast with the 37% statistic in April 2017. Interestingly, 70% of those voters say that Floyd’s killing was their motivation to support the movement. Regardless of the movement’s perception, a blind eye cannot be turned to this huge shift in American support for the



A Black Lives Matter protester carries a sign at one of the marches, following Floyd’s death. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Black Lives Matter movement.

Changes are also being made to spread awareness about the movement. In Washington, Mayor Muriel Bowser renamed a 2-block area on 16th street ‘Black Lives Matter Plaza’ and the Department of Public Works painted “Black Lives Matter” along 11 meters of road surface leading up to the White House. These memorials serve in remembrance of Floyd and the countless other innocent black lives lost at the hands of a deeply flawed policing system. However, many feel Bowser’s actions are cosmetic fixes that do not address the issues at hand. Many other things could be done regarding police reform and increased funding for local communities. Though they have value, her actions could be interpreted as detracting from making substantive changes to the Metropolitan Police Department’s oper-

ations.

Changes are also being implemented across several states to begin to uproot systemic racial violence in the US. Several corporations, including Twitter and Square, have worked to ensure that Juneteenth (the day all enslaved people were officially declared free) is recognized as a paid company holiday. These small victories acknowledge and commemorate African American stories, reaffirming the value of black lives. New laws are now being considered, such as the ‘George Floyd Law’ in California that penalizes police officers who do not intervene during acts of police brutality with potentially charging them as accessories to crimes. New York recently passed a State Senate bill banning the use of neck restraints by officers, influenced by the neck restraint used to kill Floyd.

The murder of George Floyd caused a stir in the country in ways the deaths of many other police brutality victims did not. Awareness for Floyd spread rapidly on social media, prompting massive acts of solidarity through ‘Blackout Tuesday’ and countless threads detailing how to get involved in advocating for the protection of black lives. Changes have been made, policies have been created, and more Americans have adjusted their beliefs in favor of police reform and the Black Lives Matter movement. Floyd’s death sparked conversation and awareness, paving the way for police reform and a re-evaluation of the American criminal justice system. The response to Floyd’s death was a

“The murder of George Floyd caused a stir in the country in ways the deaths of many other police brutality victims did not.”

message of hope, a message that impactful change would be made. It was a message that this country will no longer stand idly by while another black man’s life is brutally and wrongfully taken. There is certainly more work to be done, and all officers must be held accountable for their racial biases. But hope is on the horizon.

How to Submit to The Spectator

At The Spectator, we encourage any member of The Madeira School to submit to the newspaper. Articles submitted are subjected to a staff peer review and edit, then submitted for editorial review. Submission does not guarantee print, but it does help! Of particular interest to the staff are articles concerning the Madeira community, club news and events, and sports. Submissions should be sent to the editors or the advisor, Ms. Zahradnik, at thespectator@madeira.org.

Corrections

Any corrections should be sent to The Spectator’s lead advisor, Ms. Zahradnik, at thespectator@madeira.org. The publication seeks to always publish corrections as they come to our attention.

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OF HEART AND MIND

Love, Hate, or More?

Reflecting on what underlies our obsessions

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Columnist

Do our obsessions only come from love or hate? For most of us, that is the case, but let us think deeper about the underlying motives of our obsessions.

Take the example of Chillingworth from *The Scarlet Letter*, which many juniors and seniors would be familiar with. As a husband who arrives at the Massachusetts colony only to see the public condemnation of his wife Hester for adultery, Chillingworth resolves to find the other adulterer. He suspects and approaches Reverend Dimmesdale but he also develops an intellectual intimacy with him. Therefore, after proving Dimmesdale guilty, Chillingworth's obsession with revenge becomes an obsession with both staying by Dimmesdale's side and torturing him.

What are Chillingworth's motives? Despite his anger, he does not seek reconciliation with nor revenge against Hester. A possibility is that Chillingworth's wrath at the affair comes only from a "possession" (a wife) getting out of hand and finds a more controllable object of obsession with Dimmesdale. Chillingworth is unable to fully control Hester. While he can confine her morally through mar-

riage and somewhat emotionally through creating fear, he cannot control her love or her sexuality, as her adultery proves. On the other hand, Chillingworth is able to control Dimmesdale to a greater degree – physically through medicine, emotionally through fear and potentially romantic bonds, and morally through guilt.

Eventually, this desire for control grows to control Chillingworth, pushing him to see revenge as the only goal for his life. Chillingworth's struggle with Hester and Dimmesdale, therefore, may as well be a struggle with himself: he cannot overcome his obsessiveness. Hester can be any woman he supposedly loves and possesses as a wife. His heartbrokenness may prove insignificant to the anger and anxiety he feels because of a possession's escape, similar to his drain of strength at the scene of Dimmesdale's death. Chillingworth will perhaps never understand or tolerate others' escape from his control – he never escapes it himself.

Let us shift the focus back to ourselves now. Do we, like Chillingworth, have underlying motives that prompt our obsessions? The most obvious one for students would perhaps be the anxiety for perfection. Personally, I love to feel produc-

tive and fidget at the thought of submitting imperfect results. In my spare time, I even save and reload videogame progress files repeatedly, trying out every option in the game for the "right" answers that lead to the perfect ending. My preoccupation with schoolwork is always praised, the one for videogames, not so much.

Outside of our bubble of school, this obsession with perfection can also drive us crazy. Let us consider the subject of politics. Especially with our handy

"Do we have underlying motives that prompt us to obsess over certain things? The most obvious one for students would perhaps be the anxiety for perfection."

electronics aiding us in filtering for online information that best suits our political beliefs, we can often have the illusion of thinking that everyone, even on the web, thinks the same way we do. Consequently, this idea can lead to amplified annoyance at people who disagree with our opinions.

As we talk to others about politics, our reaction after hearing a different view could be either repulsion or curiosity. The

former would prompt us to estrange ourselves from the person due to a feeling of

being threatened or bewildered. The latter would encourage us to inquire why the other individual holds such views. Usually, the choice we would make between repulsion or curiosity is based on how "outrageous" we deem an idea to be and how much it matters. Both are quite subjective, but receiving filtered information makes us more prone to be repulsed.

When we listen to and read similar ideas provided by our electronics based on our preferences, we can become increasingly sure of the correctness of our ideas. After receiving countless assurances on our correctness, one disagreement from an actual person, compared to numerous agreements to our ideas we already know, can appear like simplicity or spite. We can simply choose to label the disagreeing individual irrational to eliminate

this "outlier" in the data we obtain about a specific issue.

With the dissenting voice eliminated, our own beliefs are perfect again.

The idea of obtaining perfection every time –

for us, perhaps an A, and for Chillingworth, control over others – is unhealthy. When our

motivation comes disproportionately from being correct, we could often fuss over trivialities and stop feeling intrinsic love for matters. So, while we should strive for clarity, reason, or a perfect ending in a videogame, we cannot give in to our desire for perfection every time. We are imperfect. So, at some point, we should simply set doubts aside and accept people and ourselves as we are. Ensuring that we do not get overwhelmed by our desire for control is a measure of self-control too. Will we achieve that?



The Problem with Third Party Voting

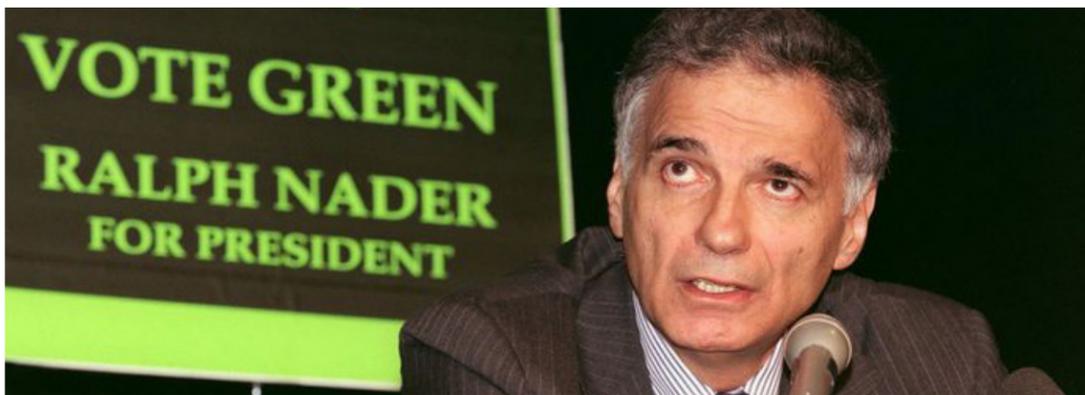
Why a third party vote backfires in a two-party system

Lilly Tanenbaum '21
Staff Writer

The American political landscape has become increasingly polarized in recent years, dominated by two opposing sides continually moving farther apart. The majority of the country falls under one of the two parties, but there are many people who identify with neither. Those voters have many different reasons for not being able to fit themselves into one party. One common reason is having a belief so far to one side of the spectrum that they view both choices as unacceptable, and a third-party candidate, though they cannot win in a two-party system, still seems better than mainstream candidates. These third-party votes can influence the outcome of the elec-

"A vote for a presidential candidate is not, then, a vote for that person's specific policies, but rather a way to influence which side of the political spectrum determines the course of the country."

tion, but often not in the way that the voter intended. In voting for a third-party candidate, voters are



In 2000, Ralph Nader was the hope for many liberals unhappy with the Clinton administration and everyone associated with it. Photo courtesy of Vince Bucci/Getty Images.

squandering their opportunity to get policies similar to what they want and avoid policies that are far from their beliefs.

Because of the way the American political system has evolved, much of the country's political agenda is determined not by which individual politicians are in power, but rather by which party controls more branches of government. The three branches of government are meant to put checks on each other's power, which is necessary to avoid one branch having too much power, but this arrangement can often make it difficult to get legislation passed efficiently. For example, if the nation has a Republican president and a Democratic majority in the Senate, that majority may not let the President confirm new judges. If both houses of Congress are controlled by Democrats

and the President is Republican, the President may veto any legislation passed by Congress. A vote for a presidential candidate is not, then, a vote for that person's specific policies, but rather a way to influence which side of the political spectrum determines the course of the country's policymaking.

An example of the issue with third-party voting can be found in the 2000 Presidential election between former Vice President Al Gore and former President George W. Bush. Third party votes for Ralph Nader played a key role in the election's outcome. Nader ran as a candidate of the Green Party, far to the left. Thus, many of the people who chose to vote for Nader would have voted for Gore if they had to choose between the two major party candidates. The

election, which was so close that it ended up being decided by a 5-4 Supreme Court vote in favor of Bush, came down to the close margin in Florida. Bush received 48.847% of the vote to Gore's 48.838%, and Nader received 1.635% in the state. Although other third-party candidates ran, none received more than 0.3%. Even if only 50% of Nader's supporters had voted for Gore, Gore would have won Florida, and thus the presidency. Nader's policies, which focused on avoiding war and implementing more environmental protections, were so far left that they would never have had much success in Congress. The anti-war sentiments that inspired many of Nader's supporters were disregarded under Bush and the Republican Party, which traditionally favors military action. Bush entered multiple wars

as President. Had supporters of Nader voted for Gore, the Democratic Party's less military heavy policies might have been implemented instead. The question then becomes: was it worth it? Nader's supporters knew their candidate would not win, but they voted for him to make a point, and in doing so they helped cause the election of the candidate who held principles that were the farthest from their own. While Gore may not have been as far left as third-party voters would have liked, he was still farther left than Bush. Having a Democrat as president would have pushed the nation closer to the far-left policies that Nader's supporters wanted.

As shown in the 2000 presidential election, voting for a third-party candidate squanders one's chance to have a direct say in the outcome of an election, and thus the direction of national policymaking, because of the nature of America's winner-take-all two-party system. American politics is so heavily based on a power struggle between two parties that in order for a voter to directly influence their government, they must vote for one of those two parties. Doing otherwise wastes the gift of democracy and removes a voter's ability to cast a vote that pushes the country in a direction aligned with the voter's own political beliefs.

Feature: Iran-Saudi Arabia Relations

How tensions between the two nations have developed

Rachael van der Linden '21
Editor-in-Chief

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are two nations that have long held dissimilar views from one another. Iran's manner of conducting foreign affairs is largely concerned with their own survival; as a nation that is an outlier in terms of religious sect and ethnicity to the rest of the Middle East, Iran seeks to support political causes that are in line with the nation's Shi'a Muslim beliefs. Conversely, Saudi Arabia is closely tied on a national level with Sunni Islam and this sect is institutionalized at almost every level of government. The tensions that exist between the two nations, largely derived from the nations' respective sectarian differences, have been developing over many years and seem only to be coming to a head.

At the outset of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Iran sought to establish influence over the surrounding region through its goals of spreading

political Islam. Unfortunately for Iran, their vision for political Islam did not resonate with many surrounding nations; though most have large populations of practicing Muslims, most adhere to Sunni Islam rather than Shi'a Islam. Iran's advocacy for such an ideal has worried Sunni nations, especially Saudi Arabia, as it views itself as the leader of the Muslim world—the nation contains the Islamic holy sites in the cities of Mecca and Medina, the former being foundational to the practice of two of the five pillars of Islam, Salah and Hajj, and the latter being the city to which the Prophet Muhammad fled during the Hijrah. Iran's renewed dedication to furthering the propagation of Shi'a Islam was off-putting to Saudi Arabia, and it contributed greatly to heightening tensions between the two nations.

In an extension of the ideological conflict that is so central to the tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the two have engaged in proxy conflicts through their involvement in supporting different sides in



Ruins after airstrikes in Yemen. Photo courtesy of Yahya Arhab of EPA.

conflicts in Iraq and Yemen. In Iraq, Iran moved in very quickly after Saddam Hussein was deposed to establish its own influence in Iraqi political affairs. Saudi Arabia had not had diplomatic contact with Iraq for thirty years until 2019, when it opened a consulate there, but Saudi Arabia has largely left the US—widely disliked by Iranians for its meddling in their political and economic affairs—to advocate for its interests in Iraq. In Yemen, Saudi Arabia has led a series of air strikes since 2015 as a result of their worries about the rise of the Houthis. Saudi leaders have been troubled by Iran's influence over state and nonstate actors in the conflict, so much so that many feel that to strike at the Houthis is to strike at Iran. The nations' involvements on opposite sides of conflicts outside their borders demonstrate how tensions between the two have only risen over the past few years.

Interestingly, the ideological and proxy conflict between the two nations is not entirely based on religious sectarianism. Tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia are tinged, in fact, by their connections to a continuation of the Cold War. Despite its end in 1991 at the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the ideological conflict wages on, in some respects, in the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as Iran is backed by Russia and Saudi Arabia is backed by Western states. Recently, some nations in

the Middle East—Saudi Arabia in particular—have become concerned by the possibility of Iran developing “hegemony” over the region in the wake of Shi'a Muslims gaining power in Iraq after the Sunni minority lost power. Such a development for the influence of Shi'a Islam in the politics of Middle East powers is notable, and it is understandably troubling for a nation such as Saudi Arabia, which has built so much of its legitimacy on

“The tensions that exist between the two nations [...] seem only to be coming to a head.”

the notion of protecting, both physically and ideologically, the Islamic holy sites.

It remains unclear whether tensions and proxy conflicts between the two nations will develop into outright military confrontation. Despite their differences, the two nations face similar challenges at the moment; both Saudi Arabia and Iran are dealing with difficult economic situations and restive youthful populations. The long history of tense relations between the two countries, largely caused by sectarian differences and ties to different global powers, creates much uncertainty about what might happen between the nations moving forward as each seeks to assert themselves as the preeminent example of Islamic government and society.

Good News

Brooke Slingluff '23
Staff Writer

Germany has a new plan to create equality within their country. This plan is called “Strong for the Future” and it has the goal of getting rid of the pay gap and putting more women in positions of power in business.

The U.K beat the record of longest time without using coal power since the Industrial Revolution, lasting two months. They expect to be coal-free within the next five years.

A Dutch city has turned over three hundred bus stops into sanctuaries for bees. These sanctuaries are putting flowers on their roofs which are perfect for the pollinators.

The domestic donkeys used as tourist attractions in Spain are beginning to gain rights. These donkeys are well-known tourist attractions that give rides to visitors to the country. There is now a weight requirement, making the rides more humane for the animals.

The Bearded Vultures that inhabit in the Alps have made a comeback after nearing extinction.

A new super enzyme has been created that can eat plastic waste. It was developed at Portsmouth University and can eat plastic at a rate six times faster than other enzymes found in the past.

England has now banned plastic straws with the goal of reducing waste.

The Uyghur Muslims in China

The mass destruction of an ethnic minority

Isabelle Murdock '22
Staff Writer

The Uyghur Muslims of modern-day China are allegedly facing suppression and torture at the hands of the country's government due to their religion and ethnic background. Uyghurs are one of China's ethnic minority groups, residing primarily in Xinjiang, a territory in the northwest of the country. The eleven million Uyghurs who inhabit Xinjiang speak their own language and practice their own culture, and they consider themselves ethnically and culturally close to Central Asian nations. In the early 20th century, the Uyghurs declared themselves independent but were later brought into the control of China in 1949, with their land designated as an autonomous region. However, the region is given little autonomy by the Chinese government.

The Chinese state has been gradually eroding the independence of Uyghur Muslims since the late 1990s, with visible signs of damage first arising between 2008 and 2009. Losses began with the implementation of laws stripping the group of their freedom of religion and expression as well as

shifting employment away from their population. In a 2013 report from Amnesty International, the group stated that authorities had criminalized “illegal religions/separatist activities,” resulting in a dramatic shrink in what was considered an appropriate expression of cultural identity.

In 2014, certain Xinjiang government departments banned Muslim civil servants from fasting during Ramadan. 2017 saw a law passed in Xinjiang forbidding male government workers from growing long beards and women from wearing veils; another report from that year revealed accounts of dozens of mosques being

“China is also facing allegations over the detainment of Uyghurs in internment/labor camps.”

destroyed by the government. Violence between the Uyghurs and the Chinese state has been rampant for years, making the Chinese government wary of Uyghurs, seeking to erase their autonomy to prevent rioting and death in the population at large.

China is also facing allegations over the detainment of Uyghurs in internment/labor camps. There are currently over 380 unidentified camps in the

Xinjiang region, most of which were constructed between 2017 and 2018. Originally, the Chinese government denied the existence of these camps and their construction. When evidence came to light showcasing them, officials labelled the buildings as “re-education centers” for Uyghur Muslims. In sharp contrast to these claims from the state, Uyghurs attest that they were detained, interrogated, and beaten in such camps.

Uyghurs have stated that they are subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse, food deprivation, sleep deprivation, forced labor, and even death while being politically indoctrinated in these camps, and that at least one million Uyghurs have been taken to camps since 2017. China has claimed that the re-education process is slowing due to its success, but the Xinjiang Data Project—an organization dedicated to broadcasting the ongoing crisis—states that camps are still being built in 2020. The Xinjiang Data Project additionally claims that there is strong evidence suggesting that detainees of the “re-education” network are being formally charged and imprisoned in higher security facilities or sent to walled factory compounds for forced labor.



Uyghurs confronted by Chinese military. Photo courtesy of Flickr.

Outside of internment allegations, there are claims that the Chinese government has been enforcing the mass sterilization of Uyghur Muslims. Uyghur women have been forced into taking birth control, using intrauterine devices, being sterilized, or having abortions. Refusal to comply results in individuals being sent to camps. Numbers show a clear rise in the use of IUDs and sterilization in Xinjiang as they decrease in the rest of China. Unless Uyghurs pay high fines for their multiple children, they are sent to internment camps, and police frequently search Uyghur homes for hidden children to ensure that these payments occur. Huge drops in birthrates can be seen in Xinjiang since 2017 as the “re-education” movement grew and camps were constructed. The Chinese government refutes all claims of mistreatment, a foreign

ministry spokesperson labelling the stories as “fake news,” and asserting that all ethnicities in the country are treated equally.

As information about the treatment of Uyghur Muslims in China has not been easily accessible to foreign journalists, spreading information about events has been difficult for most news outlets. Witness reports lend themselves to a narrative of ethnic genocide while the Chinese government maintains that the camps exist solely for re-education. China has treated leaked information as falsified, and thus it is difficult to distinguish fact from fiction under the complexity of the circumstances. Regardless, it is necessary to maintain awareness as the situation unfolds, especially considering the depth of danger China's Uyghur population still potentially faces.

Amy Coney Barrett to Replace Ginsburg

What Trump's newest Supreme Court pick means for America

Lilly Tanenbaum '21
Staff Writer

Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett was confirmed to the Supreme Court on Monday, October 26, 8 days before the presidential election. As the nation reeled from the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Trump administration began its plans to fill Ginsburg's spot on the court, selecting Barrett as the nominee. Barrett's beliefs contrast ideologically with Justice Ginsburg's, and Barrett's appointment will further cement the conservative majority on the court, as the court now has 6 conservative and 3 liberal justices. Barrett, a federal appellate judge and a professor at Notre Dame University, served as a law clerk to former Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. She was confirmed to the United States Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit in 2017. Her career has established her as a staunch conservative, agreeing on many issues with President Trump and providing a sharp contrast to the legacy of Justice Ginsburg.

The appointment of Judge Barrett to the court will impact the nation's handling of many controversial issues, including abortion. Her appointment will threaten Roe v. Wade, a ruling concerning bodily



Judge Amy Coney Barrett speaks. Photo courtesy of Alex Brandon of AP Photo.

autonomy that legalized abortion that was fought for by Justice Ginsburg during her career. In 2006, Barrett signed a letter calling abortion "barbaric." In 2016, when asked about the possibility of the Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade, Barrett said "Roe's core holding that...women have a right to an abortion - I [do not] think that would change. But I think the question of whether people can get very late-term abortions, how many restrictions can be put on clinics - I think that would change." However, Trump vowed in 2016 that any justices he appointed would overturn Roe v. Wade. With Barrett's appointment, there would be profound impacts on the rights of women to access reproductive

healthcare throughout the U.S.

In addition to abortion, Barrett's appointment to the court would push the nation's handling of gun control, health care, and immigration in a more conservative direction. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments against the Affordable Care Act, also called Obamacare, in November, shortly after the presidential election. Barrett has previously said that the Affordable Care Act is unconstitutional, indicating that she would rule against protecting it. This ruling would jeopardize the healthcare of millions of Americans. Barrett has also previously indicated that she is against any restrictions on the Second Amendment, which

guarantees the right to bear arms, saying that the government should not treat this as "a second-class right." Barrett's record also indicates conservative views on immigration: for example, she sided with a government decision to expand the rule that makes it possible to deny entry to immigrants who are likely to need government assistance.

The Senate Judiciary Committee began Barrett's hearing on October 12th. The

"Barrett's beliefs contrast ideologically with Justice Ginsburg's, and Barrett's appointment will further cement the conservative majority on the court."

Republican majority in the Senate meant Barrett faced few obstacles on her path to getting confirmed. This appointment received criticism from Democrats, who remind their Republican counterparts of the Senate's handling of the appointment of Supreme Court Justices under Obama. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and his colleagues, including Head of the Senate Judiciary Committee Senator Lindsey Graham, were against the idea of a Supreme Court appointment close to an

election four years ago, when President Obama had the chance to appoint a Supreme Court Justice. McConnell argued that the decision should be left to the next president and refused to give a hearing to Obama's nominee, claiming that the 237 days Obama had left in his term were too few for Obama to appoint a new justice. McConnell and Graham, who helped oversee the hearing, seem to have changed their minds on what qualifies as an acceptable period of time to appoint and confirm a judge, as President Trump only had 38 days between his nomination of Barrett and the presidential election. In the end, the vote regarding Barrett's confirmation was 52 to 48, with all of the Republican Senators voting in favor except Sen. Collins of Maine.

Barrett's appointment will have implications both in the coming decades and the immediate future, as the country recovers from the coronavirus. With the addition of Barrett to the court, President Trump cements a conservative legacy on the Supreme Court that will outlast his term. The loss of Justice Ginsburg and the addition of Judge Barrett signify a turn in the nation's history towards a distinctly conservative interpretation and implementation of the Constitution.

Ministration or Sterilization

Nurse reports non-consensual medical treatments at ICE facility

Megan Schmitz '21
Staff Writer

No matter how legally sound its clauses, a law only holds influence because members of society monitor its enforcement. In the absence of this oversight, authorities lack an incentive beyond duty and decency not to infringe upon the rights of the people they manage. For this reason, undocumented immigrants, who necessarily avoid attracting public attention, can be particularly vulnerable to unlawful mistreatment. On September 15, Nurse Dawn Wooten filed a complaint with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) alleging such mistreatment, specifically medical malpractice and endangerment of detainees' health, at a detention center in Georgia. Though her report contains several accusations,

its claims concerning involuntary gynecological procedures have received the most media notice. Nurse Wooten detailed several female detainees' accounts of suffering unwanted hysterectomies and other sterilizing surgeries at the hands of Dr. Mehendra Amin, the facility's gynecologist. In response, the DHS released a statement vowing to internally investigate the situation while also encouraging skepticism for anonymous, unproven allegations based on hearsay. As of October 6, the DHS investigation remains ongoing, leaving open the question of whether ICE upheld immigrants' rights or took advantage of their inherent vulnerability.

Both within the report and corroborating statements from outside sources, more than eleven cases of nonconsensual hysterectomies have been alleged.

The detainees describe Dr. Amin avoiding acquiring their consent through several different methods, including misleading them about what procedures would entail, giving false assessments of their health, and lying about the type of procedure they would receive. Though Dr. Amin maintains that he has only conducted two or three hysterectomies since 2017, an immigrant woman who spoke with Nurse Wooten contends that at least five women at the center have had their uteruses removed involuntarily, enough for detainees to allegedly refer to Dr. Amin as the "uterus collector."

In one of the reported cases, a patient claims that she received multiple, conflicting diagnoses justifying her surgery from the doctor and other members of the facility's medical staff. In another case, the doctor informed an undocumented woman that she required a hysterectomy due to heavy menstrual bleeding and thick uterine walls despite her never having experienced the former or having heard the latter during prior gynecological examinations. More generally, patients have recounted visiting the clinic for another treatment only to be informed by the doctor upon waking up from anesthesia what surgery had actually occurred. Because patients reportedly did not always receive a translator, the whistleblower could not deter-

mine whether the doctor attempted to explain the procedure and related diagnoses and was misunderstood or if he avoided seeking consent altogether. In either case, a severe breach of patient consent would have transpired, one that, if true, acting ICE Director Tony Pham has pledged to address.

Beyond hysterectomies, immigrant women also accuse

"Patients have recounted visiting the clinic for another treatment only to be informed [...] upon waking up from anesthesia what surgery had actually occurred."

Dr. Amin of botching or misrepresenting other procedures which could lead to sterilization. According to former detainee Pauline Binam, the doctor removed one of her fallopian tubes without first explaining his intentions to her. An additional anonymous patient charges the doctor with committing a surgical error that necessitated the removal of both of her ovaries. Having a cyst on her left ovary, she agreed to that ovary's extraction; however, she attests to overhearing the doctor claim during surgery that he had removed the one on her right side. Consequently, she claims that Dr. Amin took out both of

her ovaries, rendering her infertile. Because the doctor has carried out numerous procedures resulting in such infertility, some patients believe him to be motivated by an experimental desire to sterilize. No known paper trail indicates a pattern of forced sterilization, but the whistleblower has claimed that patients' medical files have been shredded and improperly marked. Taken with the fact that most patients assert that they received a referral for another treatment, this potential mishandling of files would eliminate any existing documentation. Replying to these allegations, spokespeople for ICE vehemently deny that their facilities have ever been exploited as places for medical experimentation.

Lacking the visibility of naturalized inhabitants, undocumented people depend upon the state agencies to uphold their rights. In filing her complaint on behalf of female detainees at the Ocilla, GA detention center, Nurse Wooten has contested whether such dependability can exist without enabling the mistreatment of immigrants by the state. The ensuing investigation will reveal whether the United States can and does act in accordance with its laws and principles when unfettered by the supervision of citizens, thereby illuminating the true applicability of American notions of justice.



Protestors, including whistleblower Nurse Wooten (left), demand better treatment for ICE detainees. Photo courtesy of the New York Times.

Around t

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Students participating in conversation in front of the Art Studio. *Photo courtesy of Brooke Slingluff.*

Getting a variety of foods under the coronavirus: Madeira has organized food runs and food truck visits to campus, making sure that students are able to change up their diets on the weekend.

The Calleva ropes course provides opportunities like zip-lining and a 90-foot tree climb. Anyone, regardless of experience levels, can participate.



One of the lampposts in front of the road up to the C/A. *Photo courtesy of Abby M...*

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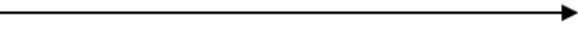


Students out on the Quad, a favored place to sit with friends safely. *Photo courtesy of Brooke Slingluff.*

For some October weekends, students went down to Black Pond, rock climbed, listened to music, and made s'mores together.

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Advisories are meeting both in-person and through teams this year, and some have adjusted the times they meet to make sure all students spend time with their advisory.



Students studying outside of the library on the new socially distanced seating. *Photo courtesy of Kiden (Kit) Okidi Olal.*



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Students sitting in the brand new safe seating out on the Oval, implemented in replacement of the benches. *Photo courtesy of Kiden (Kit) Okidi Olal.*

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In Mod 2, the hybrid model required more effort, empathy, and patience from all. However, our teachers and our continued access to learning must be appreciated.



Students enjoying a socially distanced movie night on the Science Center lawn. *Photo courtesy of Ms. Zahradnik.*

Day Off Discussion

Madeira seniors' differing perspectives on time off to vote

Brooke Slingluff '23
Staff Writer

Voting is one of the most essential elements of democracy. According to research done by the New York Times, fewer than half of voters aged 18 to 29 voted in the last presidential election. This number may still be decreasing because voting is a complicated process that can be hard for a first-time voter to understand. The lack of time that high school

seniors have to figure out the voting process can sometimes make voting a second priority. Grace Thomas, a senior voting this year, mentions that "if [a person is] happy or unhappy with the current situation of the country, one of the only ways we have a chance of changing anything is by voting."

In this depiction of voting, it creates the idea that seniors are taking voting seriously. As such, many of Madeira's seniors

would like to have the option of time off school in order to vote. In speaking about Madeira's involvement with seniors voting, Grace noted that "[her] motivation to vote comes from [her] family's example and [her] own interest in politics. In [her] experience, Madeira has not outright talked about the importance of voting. However, taking U.S. History last year taught [her] about how [the] government works and the executive powers, so that class helped

[her] understand the impacts of [her] vote." This class Madeira offers is a good place to start when it comes to creating educated voters, but some seniors feel that Madeira could provide ways to make voting easier for those who are of voting age.

The seniors explained further the way that they think Madeira should approach the topic. A.C. Frye, a senior, stated that "seniors have a lot going on with school and getting college

There are pros and cons of both sides of the discussion about the way to encourage seniors to vote. Grace resolved that she does not "think it is necessary for everyone to have the day off, but for those eligible, it would certainly make it easier." Some students feel that this solution would show that Madeira cares about seniors voting while respecting the way that everyone wants to vote. Madeira has recently announced that there will be no homework the evening of and no assessments the day after the presidential election.

This measure, combined with the support that the school is offering after the election in the form of processing groups, shows that Madeira is thinking about the way that the election will affect all members of the community. Though many seniors would like the opportunity of an excused absence to cast their votes, this announcement is certainly a measure that was valued by the community. Connecting with politics at young age is important because it allows citizens to gain experience with the voting process. As the seniors voiced, voting is incredibly meaningful, and giving them the chance to take time off to vote in coming years could relieve some of the stress that traditionally accompanies the fall of senior year.



People waiting in line to vote. Photo courtesy of Elijah Nouvelle.

"Madeira has announced that there will be no homework the evening of and no assessments the day after the presidential election."

applications done. A day to vote will reduce stress and give [them] a chance to vote." In contrast with this opinion, Kaitlyn Alsina, another senior, disagreed, sharing that she was apprehensive of having the day off. Kaitlyn explained her view that "it could be harmful because in the 'real world,' many people are not afforded the opportunity to have the day off work to vote, which means having the day off would remove the opportunity for seniors to practice the skill of working around work/school to vote in a forgiving environment."

A New Look at the Campus

The changes to the campus in the eyes of Madeira students



Students wearing masks and socially distanced. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Southworth.

Elaine Lu '23
Staff Writer

Now that we are well into the school year, boarders are beginning to come back to campus. Having spent most of the summer at home, all of us had some changes to our looks, drastic or subtle, like dying our hair, getting braces, finding a new aesthetic, or just simply growing a little taller. Closed during summer, our beau-

tiful Greenway campus also experienced several transformations, which are quickly being detected by returning students. Here are some students' comments on the differences they observed across campus.

Maylynn Rodriguez '23: Some changes I have experienced on campus so far are the new food company and social distancing. The new food company,

Meriwether Godsey, is delicious! Social distancing has been an adjustment, but our community continues to remain strong.

Abby Major '23: Madeira has changed a lot this year. The biggest changes have been the dining hall and entrance ways. It seems like every time I try to get out of or into a building I walk in the wrong direction and have to backtrack to find the proper exit.

It has also been hard to only sit 4 to a table at lunch and dinner. It used to be the best time to socialize and hang out, but now it feels very isolating and confusing. I also miss all of my friends who were unable to come, especially my roommate who is an international student. A good thing that has come out of all of this is how much free time we have. I have been able to get all of my homework done before study hall, which makes everything less stressful.

Danielle Peterkin '21: So far some of the biggest changes that have been made are not being able to leave campus, temperature checks twice a day, and the renovations to Schoolhouse 1. So far it has been hard to adjust to certain things like staying 6 feet apart or walking out the correct door. The mood has been a little more dull, but I think that is just because people are trying to adjust to all the new safety precautions.

Athena Cox '23: Campus life is very different; it takes some getting used to. Everything is distanced now, for safety, but looking at my roommate through a curtain is a new experience. It is worth it to see my friends, I just wish I could hug them. I am so glad to be on campus, and cannot wait for the rest of my friends to

come back.

Lindsay Li '22: Madeira has indeed changed a lot for this school year. Not only academic-wise but also life-wise. I can no longer hang out with my friends

"Closed during summer, our beautiful Greenway campus also experienced several transformations, which are quickly being detected by returning students."

like how I used to. All the outings and activities that I looked forward to having got cancelled. I completely understand what we have to do, but it is really hard to get used to it. We are sitting outside for meals and we are sanitizing everything all over the place. I really hope everything can get better sooner.

With its renovated schoolhouse, brand new food company, and a whole set of plans in response to COVID-19, Madeira has been able to keep its students comfortable and safe. Hopefully one day, the school will be able to welcome the rest of the students back and all can marvel at the campus's transformation.

Adapting to Hybrid Learning

How faculty is maintaining normality in a new learning environment

Safiyyah Bennett '22
Staff Writer

Madeira's response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes a detailed plan to execute hybrid learning amongst faculty and students. However, combining at home and on-campus learners creates a new set of challenges for teachers. These teachers are doing their best to adjust, and every teacher converts an in-person class to an online one differently. Their methods depend on the class in question, the needs of the students, and what method of instruction is most efficient considering that information. Dr. Boyette, a chemistry teacher, explains

"Faculty members are rapidly adapting to meet the demands of their students."

that her classes serve as reinforcement for online lessons students view the night before. "It is sort of like a flipped classroom," she remarks. Class time is spent on the class's logistics, ensuring that each student understands the lesson. This demonstrates one way teachers are choosing to re-imagine



Teachers have been individually preparing the best way to successfully teach students in a hybrid learning environment. Photo courtesy of The Madeira School.

classes in order to effectively teach students is by recording and posting lessons outside of regular class time. This allows students to rewind and re-watch lessons and come to the next class with questions. As teaching lessons during a shortened class period becomes more complex, faculty members are rapidly adapting to meet the demands of their

students.

A few classes at Madeira are traditionally more involved, requiring teachers to interact with students in order to share supplies, give demonstrations, and work one on one with students. Many STEAM classes at Madeira are molding their hands-on classes to cater to both distance and in-person learning, challenging fac-

ulty members to reinvent the structure of their classes. Ms. Newman, Chair of Madeira's Arts department, states that hybrid learning has changed her perspective greatly. "Hybrid learning, in a way, has challenged me to think about how I talk about art... [the hybrid learning environment] kind of keeps me on my toes." Thinking about different ways

to describe and visualize art is extremely important, now more so than ever. Technology and online resources are a great help in relaying artistic descriptors to students. "I can actually do a lot of what I would do in person, digitally," she adds, and cites a tablet and OneNote as the tools that help her stay connected and demonstrate art to her students.

Madeira is also making changes to ensure that its core values of integrity and honor are maintained. Many teachers adapt by limiting the temptations to cheat, making tests and quizzes open note for all. "I just try to lower the stakes a little bit," Dr. Boyette notes, regarding her new classroom environment. Giving students the opportunity to use notes on assignments greatly helps them ease into online learning. This method of conducting assessments takes off some of the pressure, as both students and teachers work together to navigate hybrid learning. During a typical hybrid learning day, Madeira teachers are constantly learning as well. They are adopting new methods and techniques to best cater to students in their times of need.

FLASH DEBATE

Campus Reopening in a Pandemic

Safiyyah Bennett '22
Staff Writer

This pandemic has affected each Madeira student differently, presenting new challenges to overcome. However, now is not the time to prolong the virus by returning to on-campus learning. Even with the strictest safety precautions, it is impossible to ensure that each student follows protocol, as adults are not able to monitor each student.

Due to the wide range of students at Madeira, each

"Regulating 24/7 enforcement of these rules cannot always be guaranteed, as each student is responsible for their individual health and wellbeing."

community member might differ in their respective approaches to mask wearing, social distancing, and quarantining. It is impossible for Madeira to instill a particular outlook and set of health and security standards on students, influencing girls to take these measures seriously

when not under the watchful eye of adults. In an age where science has become politicized and the level of pandemic precaution taken by individuals can vary, regulating 24/7 enforcement of these rules cannot always be guaranteed, as each student is responsible for their individual health and wellbeing. Teenagers are prone to impulsive and selfish decision making and cannot be trusted to make the right choice.

Although differing viewpoints play a role, we also cannot argue with the facts. Coronavirus cases in Virginia are spiking, with 160,000 cases and counting being reported in the United States are predict-

ed to increase exponentially during fall and wintertime, when people are spending more time indoors and holiday traditions prompt more mingling and socializing than before. It is impossible to regulate and monitor where each student goes and who she sees during the day, and one positive COVID-19 test could result in an outbreak, endangering hundreds of girls and their families.

An environment with both boarding and day students, like the Madeira campus, is a potential hot spot for COVID-19. Human lives are at risk. When mass amounts of people come together in a global pandemic, it is only a recipe for disaster.

Brooke Slingluff '23
Staff Writer

Opening schools has been a difficult process for everyone. The amount of planning and the new precautions have been an adjustment for all community members. This begs the question of whether it is truly worth it to keep school

open. One important reason why school opening is, in fact, worth the trouble is because of the important mental health benefits of being with others. Young adults are still learning about the world and how to interact with their peers—an important skill when entering life past high school. Not being able to have experiences connecting friends and teachers could have countless harmful effects on developing teens.

According to Newport Academy, a teen treatment center, these effects could include higher stress levels, difficulty sleeping, larger amounts of anxiety and even a potential more negative outlook on the world. The interactions that we have each day with other people are often unnoticed, but they are vital to the mental health of teenagers. By having students at school, Madeira is putting forward a message that the mental health of students is a priority. Keeping the balance of both mental health and academics is another topic that must be considered while considering the reopening of school.

At Madeira, where learning is undoubtedly a priority, being able to stay productive and keep up with the rigors of academic life is an important part of the design to reopen. Keeping the school closed makes learning much harder for many students, and high school should be a time of huge learning growth. It is difficult to expect students to be able to keep up with school with the distractions of home life all around. Opening school is giving students a chance to be in a familiar environment where learning is an easier task.

Overall, opening schools as soon as possible is of the utmost importance to the health of a student in all regards. In conclusion, while keeping in mind the importance of students' overall wellbeing, Madeira reopening campus was the correct choice. Madeira has given students the chance to interact with their teachers and peers and to learn in a familiar environment with fewer distractions, thereby providing a meaningful high school experience for its students.

Riding in the Time of Quarantine

Madeira's riding program and its current status

Isabelle Murdock '22
Staff Writer

The riding community at Madeira has always been easily recognizable as a group with a strong passion for their sport and equally strong support for each other. Everyone feels a weighty connection to their horse and a sense of companionship for their fellow riders, nurtured by the time spent together in and around the barn and arena. So, when it came to light that COVID-19 and its restrictions were to become the unfortunate reality, many were understandably saddened by the thought of being unable to ride or to interact with their friends at the barn or during group lessons. Fortunately, Madeira was able to create a program that allowed riders to, at the very least, be able to continue riding lessons as individuals or duos.

The barn is taking extra precautions by ensuring everyone who enters the space immediately washes their hands and signs in. By doing this, the barn makes sure that should anyone contract COVID-19, the administration will be able to manage contact tracing. To assist with this

further, the tack rooms are now split between riders who board their horses and those belonging to the school and leased to riders. In the stables themselves, the aiseways have been cleared of tack-up stations, to lessen the potential of close contact, with the crossties moved into the stalls themselves so girls can prepare their horses without running the risk of running into others. Riders who lease their horses now have personalized brush buckets, replacing the former method of having brushes for a specific horse

"Riders themselves seem to hold the opinion that while they miss the sense of community that existed prior to current regulations, they are incredibly happy to be back and able to ride."

rather than the rider herself.

Students who board their horses have their own tack-trunks and provide their own grooming equipment to keep shared item usage minimal. On top of this, there are now sanitizing stations which riders use before and after handling any commonly touched

item, making the barn as safe as it could be given the circumstances. Outside of the barn and in the lessons themselves, group lessons have lowered capacity to one to two girls at once in the arena to ensure physical distancing. Additionally, a virtual curriculum is offered for those who cannot participate in-person, with classes discussing the parts of the horse or saddle and general information about riding.



Two horses stand, ready for riding. Photo courtesy of Libreshot.

Riders themselves seem to hold the opinion that while they miss the sense of community that existed prior to current regulations, they are incredibly happy to be back and able to ride. Chloe Plaschka, class of '22 and one of the co-captains of the riding team, says, "I missed it so much, and just being able to still go through the motions and still catch up with the trainers and my friends ... I am really grateful that

we are able to do it." Maya Wyman, the other co-captain, added on that being able to ride has allowed many students within the community to maintain a sense of normality throughout the chaos. Riders, both those who lease their horses from the school and those who board their own, are thankful to be back to riding and engaging with the horses, instructors, and – when they can – each other.

Athletic Restrictions

Students' accounts of rules and changes in the athletic department



Kaitlyn Cronin, '22 (left) and Saira Vyas, '22 (right) get ready to play sports while wearing masks. Photo courtesy of The Madeira School.

Abby Major '23
Staff Writer

This school year has come with some challenges. With the coronavirus pandemic threatening to shut down school again, many precautions need to be taken to keep both students and faculty safe. This is no different in the athletics department, which is using social distancing, masks, and loads of disinfectant, among other measures, to keep students safe. Different sports have varied rules and regulations, but health

and safety concerns have been a key factor in all of the changes the athletics department has made to accommodate in-person athletics. Though these are effective safety measures, they can be a challenge to work through. Some students have shared their opinions on the changes on the Madeira campus and how it has affected their experiences with athletics.

Nissi Sigei '24 (Swimming for Conditioning): Swimming for Conditioning is a unique D-block because we fortunately have a pool at Madeira, so we

swim every day except for Thursdays. When [we] walk into the pool, the benches are taped off at six feet so we keep our distance, and we are greeted by a masked Coach Montrie. We do our out of water warmups (arm swings, stretches, etc.) with our masks on and we walk over to our whiteboards one at a time. We look at the workouts for the day and right before we jump in the water, we have our masks off. Each girl is given their own lane so they can properly socially distance and we do our workouts. Immediately af-

ter we get out of the water, we put our masks back on and, if a girl chooses to, they go change in the locker room, where only two people are allowed at a time.

Searra Baker '23 (Fitness): They marked the floor with tape for people to stand 6 feet apart in the gym. We have to disinfect all the weights after we use them with hand sanitizer spray and disinfectant wipes. They put cones in the hallway (6 feet away from each other) where we have to wait before we go into the weight rooms, which takes a long time, but it also feels safer than all of us being in there at once.

Saanvi Paladugu '23 (Volleyball): One major change this year for athletics at Madeira during COVID is the mask policy while in practice. Personally, for me, it is a big change wearing masks while running or playing volleyball at Madeira. Compared to last year, all the health screenings before practice are also a huge change. All athletes must also keep social distancing in mind during and after practice.

Lydia Callabresi '21 (Field Hockey): The athletic department has implemented some new requirements for our daily D-block. The biggest change that I can think of is how they have us participate in Breakaway. We now split into 2-3 groups (core, weights, and cardio) and sanitize the equipment after we finish using it. In addition, we break up into little squares in order to partake in our separate activities.

Grace Thomas '21 (Field Hockey): I have really enjoyed being able to play my sport again. It has been so nice to be with my team and meet the new girls. I think initially there were some kinks that needed to be worked out, but the athletic department has problem solved and been creative with how to adapt their programs to COVID-19 circumstances. I really appreciate my coach's sensitivity to our safety and comfort level.

Though this year has been hectic and confusing, Madeira students have persevered through the challenges and now continue their athletic growth. Safety and health are on everyone's mind, but these students have risen above the challenges and hope to be back to a full

"Different sports have varied rules and regulations, but health and safety concerns have been a key factor in all of the changes the athletics department has made to accommodate in-person athletics."

season by next year or sooner. The athletic staff has had to make sacrifices, but the players and students are very grateful for the chance to participate in their sports while also staying safe. The Madeira community cannot wait to be back in the stands cheering on their fellow snails.

An Ethical Expense

Is the famed strawberry dress really worth its price?

Kate Chamberlin '22
Assistant Editor

As with most things today, the now-famous strawberry dress rose to popularity through the power of social media. It is impossible to pinpoint exactly which incident solidified the dress's fame or to know what exactly the final step in its rise to popularity was. However, it is now inarguably a cultural staple: ask anyone active on Twitter or TikTok if they have heard of the strawberry dress and the answer will be a definitive yes. Finding its grasp in the aesthetic of 'cottagecore' — an idealized life of disconnection from the common world in order to self-survive whilst living in a cottage — the strawberry dress slowly but surely started to appear on wish lists around the globe. Buyers cited it as a rare source of joy in the pandemic — a small source of happiness, disconnected from the fear surrounding the summer.

This trend of a 'summer dress' is not anything new — for years now, a certain dress will become popular in the summer, becoming sought after particularly by younger generations. Yet Lirika Matoshi's most famous

design is unique not only in its unconventional appearance, but in a much more important factor for buyers: its price. While previous summer dresses have been noted for both their fashionable appearance and low price, the strawberry dress is marked at an impressive \$490. As is human nature, buyers sought to find cheaper replicas of the dress — but why is the dress so expensive? What warranted such a high cost?

The strawberry dress is certainly not an exception to

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the designer's pricing, as Lirika Matoshi's website features dresses that range in price from \$150 to as high as \$1,500. But Matoshi has something that knockoff creators do not: entirely ethically sourced materials. Her high prices are not simply grabs at buyers' money, but rather funding for her entirely ethical business model. In addition to getting her

materials fairly, Matoshi pays her team—comprised entirely of female workers—a living wage. Matoshi has two factories: one in New York City, where the company is based, and one in Kosovo, where she was born, that she and her sister, another designer Teuta Matoshi, built from scratch.

While Matoshi's prices are certainly higher than the average person would spend, they are not what one would label as unreasonable. Copies and replicas of the strawberry dress come faster and cheaper, as is their appeal, but at the cost of underpaid and exploited workers through every step of their creation. In buying the original, customers are not only supporting a self-made designer with original ideas, but the business model she follows that allows her team to live happily and healthily. Though fashion is often financially inaccessible, it is not an issue strictly found in the strawberry dress's cost. If a possibility, the purchase of the original strawberry dress is, at its core, a moral decision. In a world full of unethical exploitation and immoral business plans, society must strive to be ethical whenever possible. Ethics in fashion is not without its complications,



The famed strawberry dress. Photo courtesy of Lirika Matoshi.

but a movement has begun to choose thrifting over buying from corrupt fast fashion brands. In shopping secondhand, buyers can minimize labor exploitation

and material waste. Kindness is extraordinary, and though in this case it does indeed have a cost, those who can must decide that it is a price they are willing to pay.

The Rise of Among Us

What it is and how it has thrived during the pandemic

Helen Zhao '22
Staff Writer

Bored during quarantine and looking for a fun and interactive online game to play? The game Among Us would be a great choice. Among Us is a video game that was created in 2018, has recently risen to popularity during the pandemic as everyone is looking for games to keep themselves entertained. Among Us is a multiplayer game that is set in space, and all players are assigned to one of two roles: Crewmates and Imposters. Crewmates must complete a set number of tasks successfully without being killed by the Imposters. The Imposters' goal is to blend in with the crowd and kill the Crewmates. After a body is reported or when an emergency meeting is called, there are voting sessions in which all players discuss who they think is suspicious or could

"Investigating the truth about players' characters is always thrilling and intriguing."

be the Imposter. The Imposters lie about their true identity and accuse innocent Crewmates of being Imposters while Crewmates work together to uncover the lies that their opponents tell. After each voting session, the player



Game poster of "Among Us." Image courtesy of InnerSloth.

with the most votes is ejected, but can continue their tasks and remain in the game as a ghost.

The debate among players after each meeting as they give their "testimony" and argue over their innocence veils the true identity of each player, adding mystery to the game. The game perfectly creates a sense of puzzlement and gives players the opportunity to solve cases, find clues, and closely observe the behaviors of others, just like detectives. Players slowly detecting and then exploiting the personality traits of other players is where the beauty of the game lies. The anx-

iousness of finding out the truth urges users to create scenarios in which they guilt others. Investigating the truth about players' characters is always thrilling and intriguing. Among Us might appear similar to games like Werewolf and Mafia, but it opens its gates to a larger audience because its roles are easier to learn and provides safe connection among friends and family, as it is played without the need for close contact with others.

During the pandemic, more activities moved online. People are shifting from in-person to online socializing, bring-

ing more internet users which boosts players for computer games. Among Us is a great way to keep friends connected while also helping users to meet peers online. While the pandemic has kept us all apart, the game made a new push towards strengthening friendship. The game is not particularly complex, making it simple to play for almost all users. It also does not require any fees and downloading the app can be done with a simple tap.

Video games are a perfect way to relax on weekends or vacations. Multi-player games are even better, as players can

interact with real humans instead of robots in the game system which makes every game a new and thrilling experience. Among Us is much more than a game about acting or lying to friends. It contains logical reasoning and detecting. So how can we all get involved in this fascinating game? Currently, SWWAG is hosting online Among Us game nights, which would be a great way to interact with peers in the Madeira community. Among Us, the ultimate game for gatherings during the pandemic period, will likely remain popular even after this coronavirus era is over.

Wedding Ceremonies' Adaptations

The new formats of grand gatherings under COVID-19

Helen Zhao '22
Staff Writer

Weddings, which may be once in a lifetime celebration for some, mark an exciting and extremely crucial time of one's life. Everyone would want to make their marriage celebration perfect and unforgettable. Sadly, as coronavirus cases are rising, many gatherings are being banned. Despite the spread of the disease, one thing is certain: people will always fall in love. That makes weddings unstoppable even during the pandemic, creating the need for wedding ceremonies' structures to be changed since social interactions are severely restricted during this period. The restrictions of in-person gatherings in most of the areas in the U.S. leave many couples hoping to get married in these times dissatisfied and disappointed. In these times, there are mainly three options for couples adjusting their weddings: hosting weddings virtually, holding ceremonies in person, or postponing them until a time that is safe for gatherings.

As the pandemic continues, more and more events are becoming virtual, such as school, speeches, and family gatherings. Wedding ceremonies are no exception. Those who choose to have a virtual wedding do so to reduce the risks of getting infected and spreading the disease further. A virtual wedding certainly does not seem like the most en-

joyable choice, as it would make it much more difficult to interact with family and friends. With no more big parties and fewer events, virtual weddings would reduce much of the excitement present at weddings. States also have many different rules regarding the legality of couples getting married virtually. Some states allow virtual marriages while other states require an in-person officiant signing the couple's marriage license in order for the marriage to be legal. However, there are many advantages to a virtual wedding.

"Although this time period might not seem easy [...] the ceremonious style of gathering before the pandemic will eventually make its return."

Having the celebration virtually would be much less costly, reducing the costs of food, drinks, and other expenses in inviting guests. Even though virtual weddings restrict physical interactions which make it harder for active engagement among guests, they ensure the community's health and safety without losing the ceremonial aspects of weddings.

While some couples are planning virtual weddings, others are holding their weddings in-person with different structures. Since there are many restrictions involved with using most venues, the number of guests is also



Weddings with masks. Photo courtesy of The Baltimore Sun.

severely limited, so some choose to host their wedding ceremonies on personal lands like their own households. There are also changes regarding attire. Some weddings require their guests to wear masks, resulting in some dissatisfaction, especially for the groom and the bride. Touching and close interactions with others present would also be hard to resist. Instead of hugs and kisses, there would only be nods and eye contact when guests greet the hosts. Even with clear rules and instructions, it would still be difficult for venue owners to stop the wedding participants from breaking social distancing. With all participants being in a closed space, breathing the same air, it would be easy for the disease to spread. Considering these risks, some couples have decided to change to another way of getting married: sequel weddings. In these weddings, couples invite smaller groups of people each time, making appearances at several smaller events. Others decide to make their guests come

at staggered times. This allows the venue owners to have time in between guests to sanitize the space while also allowing guests to spend more time individually with couples.

Even with restrictions and the need to maintain distance during the pandemic, large group gatherings and ceremonial events are still going on, either virtually or with some amendments to their structure. Couples who are planning to get married during this period must look toward having some changes to their big day. The shifts in style of weddings are not necessarily a bad thing, as there still will be active engagement among guests. Although this time period might not seem easy and pleasant for all who are planning to have a grandiose wedding, there are certainly still ways for couples to hold wedding ceremonies without risking the spread of the virus, and the ceremonious style of gathering before the pandemic will eventually make its return.

Autumn Horoscopes

Abby Major '23
Staff Writer

Libra

September 23-October 22

Libras will have a lucky month. Despite this, Libras may have disagreements with roommates if they are not on the same page. They should keep searching for ways they can agree on their living conditions. Libras may feel overwhelmed and might need help. Libras should be open and honest – they will thank themselves in the future.

Scorpio

October 23-November 21

Scorpios are keeping a steady pace, which is impressive! If they have lost any focus, it will return this month. Even though projects keep adding up, they continue to meet the challenges they face. It will not be an easy month, but it could be productive. Scorpios should expect monetary gains this month, bringing a boost of positivity and enthusiasm.

Sagittarius

November 22-December 21

No matter what happens, Sagittarians always stay confident that things will turn around. Their constant smile makes them lovable, as does their unshakable optimism. Even when things are falling apart, their sunny disposition always pays off. They are almost like a good luck magnet! It is a great time for Sagittarians to catch up with friends and family.

How Is This Sitcom an Emmy-sweeping Success?

A look at the success of the TV series 'Schitt's Creek'

Elaine Lu '23
Staff Writer

Schitt's Creek is a Canadian situational comedy created by Dan Levy and Eugene Levy that aired on CBC Television from January 13, 2015 to April 7, 2020. The series follows the formerly wealthy Rose family when, after losing their fortunes, they are forced to live in Schitt's Creek, a small town Johnny Rose (Eugene Levy) once purchased for his son as a joke. Now living in a motel in the town, Johnny and Moira Rose (Catherine O'Hara)—along with their adult children, David (Dan

Levy) and Alexis (Annie Murphy)—must adjust to life without money and with each other.

When the show first aired on CBC, it did not receive much attention. But Schitt's Creek gained popularity a few years later after landing on Netflix, receiving acclaim for its writing, humor, acting, and representation. The TV show won nine awards at this year's Emmys, including major categories such as Outstanding Comedy Series, Outstanding Writing and Outstanding Directing for Dan Levy, and setting a record for winning all four major acting categories—Lead Actor,

Lead Actress, Supporting Actor, and Supporting Actress—for Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara, Dan Levy, and Annie Murphy, respectively. The series also beat The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel's 2018 record for most Emmy wins for a comedy series in a single season.

The Canadian show is a fun parody of reality TV shows. It uses the absurd imagery of the arrogant rich living among ordinary people to create comical conflicts. However, every character possesses great depth and goes beyond conforming to the "rich people" stereotypes of being aloof, and each character demonstrates

monumental growth across the seasons—making the show more vivid than just dry silly clashes between the rich and the poor. Moira Rose, for example, used to star in soap operas and always insists on making herself look polished and beautiful. But despite her "celebrity" lifestyle, she never misses a chance to go to town councils or the local acapella singing group's practices. Not only that, she also deeply cares for Johnny and her kids, as well as the relationships she builds with people in the town, though her kindness sometimes may be misunderstood by others around her.

Similarly, Alexis Rose seems bratty when first presented to the audience. Nevertheless, Annie Murphy brought more layers to the character than just a selfish rich girl who cannot adjust to a less affluent life. A more vivid character unravels before the audience as we see Alexis change through her relationship with Mutt, help her brother, obtain her high school diploma and associate degree before starting her own business, and much more.

Moreover, Schitt's Creek mastered what no other show has—intentional yet seamless integration of a fully diverse cast of characters from different angles, including sexuality, race, and age.

Yet these identities never become a defining characteristic for the show's characters. With such fabulous characterizations, the run-down town was able to accommodate people from different worlds with different personalities, creating unique comical moments for the audience.

Overall, Schitt's Creek is not only a show with undoubtedly wonderful acting skills and well-paced plots, it also presents

"Schitt's Creek mastered what no other show has—intentional yet seamless integration of a fully diverse cast of characters from different angles, including sexuality, race, and age."

a variety of characters with different identities and truly embraces those identities, while many other shows merely provide one or two different identities to provide "representation" that is little more than tokenism. It is a marvelous show that is truly relatable and enjoyable to every audience. For those who would like to watch the Emmy-winning series, all six seasons of Schitt's Creek are now available on Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime Video.



The Rose family gathers around Moira's phone in their final days in the Rosebud Motel. Photo courtesy of Flickr.