

VOLUME 106 ISSUE 4

March 17, 2023

ballardtalisman.org

TALISMAN

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Mission Statement

The Ballard Talisman is an open public forum for student expression, and exists to give a student perspective on issues relating to the Ballard student body and community. Please send signed letters with author's name, class or position (e.g. parent, student, teacher, etc.) to the editor.

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Letters submitted must be signed. Though, in some cases, the author's name may not have to be printed. Letter will appear on the editorial page or in the opinions section

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Unsigned editorials represent the majority view of the staff editorial board.

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The staff reserves the right to refuse or edit editorials and letters for libelous content, obscenity or material considered inappropriate for publication. The Talisman staff is aware of sound journalistic practice found in the 'Code of Ethics,' as part of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Land Acknowledgement

The Ballard Talisman acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Coast Salish people. We respect Indigenous sovereignty and honor their right to self-determination. In our coverage, we commit to uplifting Native voices and the experiences of the Indigenous community.

Corrections:

In the article, "School-wide assembly spurs conversations about hate speech," Jewish Student Union (JSU) was also present during the conversations with RET and administration.

The Idealization of Female Pain

Lina McRoberts Guest Contributor

In the early months of 2022, I found myself in the alcoves of a prodigious depressive episode – the kind that straps weights to your wrists and makes you question everybody's very existence. I spent most of my days studying to distract from this existential thrall. However, when that became too much of a burden, I resorted to lying quietly on my bed, staring at the ceiling, and listening to various audiobooks – justifying this as merely an extension of my studying. I often found it difficult to distinguish when I was dreaming from when I was awake.

I am in my "My Year of Rest and Relaxation" era: unhinged. I am waking at erratic hours, I am weeping, I am writing and never rioting, I am seeing shapes on the map on my wall. I am never washing my face, I am consuming, I am laying waste to my reputation. I am remembering to walk into my kitchen, barefoot and hair-down with a groggy expression on my face, so I'll sound sexy in my memoir. Even when I was purportedly at my lowest, I was filtering my experiences through the eyes of the watcher within (thank you, Atwood). The yearn to editorialize our experiences - to glamorize the "unseen" and live for our yet-to-be-written-biographies — has become an inevitable trait of womanhood, as inescapable as breathing.

At its core though, the romanticization of woman's suffering has less to do with the actual suffering, and more with public analyses and internalized avoidance. Nobody will admit it, but what nearly everyone wants is for women to be in excruciating pain, and then proceed to kill themselves before they can begin to complain. They would rather we be sad but dead so somebody can write about how beautifully heart-broken we were. **Women are intended to be mythology without autonomy;** and in our attempts to be desired, we play into the Woman in Pain archetype.

Does anyone want me? They must, because I am here and I am alive, right? I think I love to suffer, and I want to make sure that I am suffering just the right amount: not enough to be labeled as crazy or mentally ill, but enough to give the illusion that I am unknowing of my hysterics, delicate in my pain. Am I suffering beautifully? I hope so. And within those two sentences you, my dear readers, may see that I have a voyeuristic relationship with my own agony. But then again, what woman does not? What woman does not secretly play "the fool", "the innocent", "the immature"? What woman does not gasp in amazement at a shirtless chest or flush at stories of past sexual conquests? **There is something**

uncomfortably liberating in playing the damsel in distress.

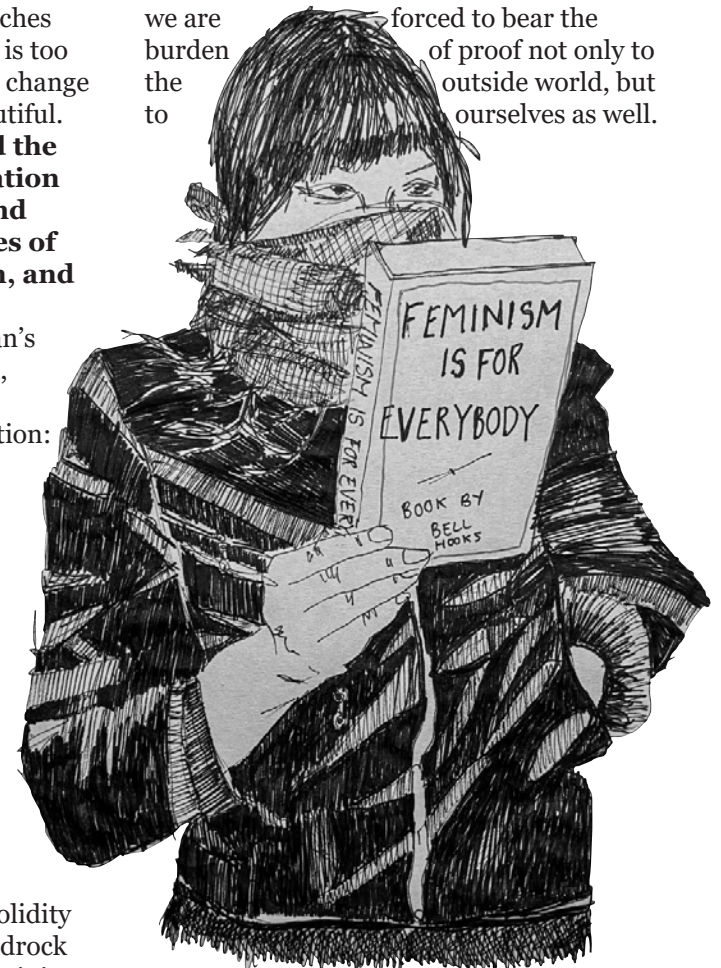
Pain, at first physical and later emotional, is an essential part of the female grooming process, and that is not accidental. Plucking our eyebrows, shaving under the arms, learning to walk in high-heeled shoes. The pain teaches an important lesson: that no price is too great, no process too repulsive, no change too painful for a woman to be beautiful. **The tolerance of this pain and the romanticization of that toleration begins here in adolescents, and serves to prepare girls for lives of childbearing, self-indignation, and husband-pleasing.**

The male response to the woman's pain, of being made up and bound, is thus a learned fetish. As such, romance becomes role-differentiation: superiority based on culturally enforced inferiority. And yet, we as women continue to play into this archetype. But god, it feels so good to be understood, if only as a caricature. I would be lying if I were to say that I do not find great comfort in my femininity. I like being small and purportedly frail; I like the fact that I am able to see my collar bones and tie up my purposely unkempt hair. Concurrently however, knowing that I can philosophize, reflect, analyze, and write provides with solidity and reinforcement, an invisible bedrock rightness that reassures me, just as it is reassuring to know that below me blue whales swim, placid in faraway waters, that I am here, that I am alive, and that that is okay.

The question then becomes, is it possible to play into this inferior archetype while simultaneously obtaining equality - and the answer, quite clearly, is a resounding no. **It is impossible to attain equality within an intrinsically unequal society.** And yet, try as I might, I can only seem to understand myself through the fantasies of my supposed pain – and, just as I reassure myself that my self-destructive tendencies are some sort of built-in, inherent sense of self, I cannot help but wonder, to what extent are they creating me too. **Who**

would we be if we confronted our rage, and would it be enough?

The idealization of our pain may be an inevitable facet of womanhood, or it may be a narcissistic tendency of the masochistic egocentric. Whatever it may be, it strikes me as remarkable that when women hurt, we are forced to bear the burden of proof not only to the outside world, but to ourselves as well.



Cartoon by Lina McRoberts, president of Feminist Club, Adoptee & Foster Club and Model United Nations.

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SPS social media lawsuit met with Seattle Student Union protest

Students push for higher counselor to student ratios in response to mental health concerns

Annie Welman Editor-in-Chief

As Seattle students have emerged from years of online school and returned to the classroom, families and educators alike have raised concerns about mental health among students. While some students have pointed to a lack of mental health resources or COVID as reasons for mental health issues, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has recently chosen another path in response to student struggles.

In early January, SPS filed a complaint against a collection of major social media companies, arguing that they are partly the cause of anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. Though this is the first of such cases pursued by a school district, the Kent School District has also joined the complaint.

In response to the lawsuit, the Seattle Student Union (SSU) has voiced their opposition, arguing that the district should focus on other strategies for improving student mental health. Chetan Soni, the executive student director of SSU, explained his outlook on the lawsuit in a student press conference at the Washington Journalism Education Association State Conference.

“Public perception has been skewed [by the lawsuit] to focus the blame on social media companies,” Soni said.

Rather than targeting social media companies and shifting the blame away from the District, SSU members argue that SPS should be dedicating

resources towards alternative changes, such as providing higher counselor to student ratios.

“We’ve had three, four month waitlists to see a counselor and unfortunately ... that is just not acceptable,” Soni said.

The lawsuit will not take resources from the SPS budget, as the independent law firm representing SPS is taking the case on a “contingency basis,” says the SPS website. Though the lawsuit could result in a monetary settlement, Soni believes that SPS already has the necessary resources to put changes in place.

“The district refuses to invest in youth mental health support,” Soni said.

In addition to monetary gains, the district has other intentions.

SPS has shared that the objective with the lawsuit is not to eradicate social media entirely, but, as a press release from Jan. 10 describes, is to “... force these companies to take responsibility for the harm caused by their business practices.”

Though SSU acknowledges the harmful impacts of social media, they have protested this lawsuit because they believe there are better alternatives for SPS. This protest has included

press releases and participating in interviews with local news agencies, such as a KNKX interview with Noir Goldberg, an executive board member and BHS junior.

Goldberg volunteered to participate in the interview after KNKX reached out to SSU in hopes of hearing their perspective. On

KNKX, Goldberg described how social media is only one of many factors to blame, and that she hopes the district focuses on implementing more counselors.

“There [are] multiple ways to mitigate the effects of mental health [issues] within schools,” Goldberg said. “... we have asked [SPS] multiple times to increase funding for mental health support. So that would be counselors and therapists ...”

Currently, Soni, Goldberg and others are working on putting together specific goals for counselors in schools.

Based on recommendations from the National Counselor Board and SSU conversations, Goldberg believes that the target counselor to student ratio should be 200 to one. In comparison, the current counselor to student ratio at BHS is approximately 300 to one, and not all schools throughout the district are the same.

“... we want the counselors to be representative of the diversity within the school,” Goldberg said.

As the lawsuit progresses, SSU will continue to advocate for alternative strategies to improve mental health, in hopes of putting more counselors in schools and investment in these resources.



ASB’s perspective on the 2023 Winter Ball

Three members of ASB reflect on their experience with ticket sales, long lines and more

Matea Hart Staff Reporter

Each year, at least three dances are held at Ballard High School, and each year, the student body and ASB has expectations of how these dances are executed.

For Homecoming, students complained about the extensive line outside, and at Winter Ball, there was ticket confusion and complaints of food not being provided to students attending.

ASB President Cass Sylves, Club Coordinator Addy Wynkoop and ASB Treasurer Emma Steinburg, who is also a member of the Talisman staff, were all given various tasks in preparing for this year’s winter dance, which was held on Feb. 10 at the Seattle Art Museum.

Steinburg, who was put to the task of coordinating ticket sales, reflected on the process of selling them, encouraging the student body to purchase tickets as soon as possible to avoid last minute stress.

“A lot of people waited until the last day, after we were almost sold out. I think people need to go sooner,” Steinburg said.

She also emphasized her hopes for the future in ASB’s communication with the student body on ticket sales.

“I think we could make it so there’s more announcements. We also didn’t really mention

enough that there was a limit on tickets. I think that’s one thing ASB could improve in the future,” Steinburg said.

Wynkoop, in charge of the parking situation and ticket prices, also voiced her perspective on the ticket purchasing process.

“I wish that we could’ve sold the tickets for less. It’s difficult when we want to choose a nicer venue because that makes the tickets more expensive to cover the costs,” Wynkoop said.

She also briefly responded to the complaints the student body made on the lines for purchasing tickets.

“There were a lot of complaints about long lines, but within our first two weeks when the prices were the lowest we had a bunch of days where nobody was buying tickets. I’d just ask the student body to maybe get on it a little more,” Wynkoop said. “If they have the money, it’s a great chance to skip the line and buy it early for a cheaper price.”

When asked about their plans for the future dances, the trio unanimously agreed on figuring out a way for the tickets to be purchased completely online to make the process easier for both the student body and members of ASB.

Sylves, who organized the venue, emphasized how much easier this buying process would be.



Ms. Lehni, Addy Wynkoop and Cass Sylves discuss Winter Ball. (Emma Steinburg)

“I really want to have online tickets. When we only sell tickets, there’s human error and it makes it hard. If we could just do online tickets I feel like it would be easier for everyone to pay. Having a QR code, no line, with tickets on your phone,” Sylves said.

Considering all the hoops they had to jump through, the group considered Winter Ball overall a successful dance and an improvement from the organization used for homecoming. When asked about the overall success of Winter Ball this year, Wynkoop recalled her personal experience at the dance.

“Yeah, I think it was super successful. Like personally, my friends and I had a lot of fun and it seemed like everyone else did too. I think it was a big step up from homecoming,” Wynkoop said.

The end of snow days

With advancements in technology, schools are increasingly able to provide remote learning options that make traditional "snow days" a thing of the past

Penelope Neireiter Staff Reporter

On Sept. 1, 2022, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) announced new plans for schedule changes in the event of weather or climate that is severe, harsh or unpleasant, particularly in terms of cold, wet or windy conditions. While winter weather may or may not continue to impact the school district this year, two scenarios have been introduced.

The first scenario is a two hour late start for regular in-person learning if road conditions are likely to improve after the morning. The second scenario will be enacted in the case of a full-day closure of school buildings due to inclement weather. Students will engage in remote learning from home, ensuring that students continue to receive instruction and stay on track with their learning.

"Having to do online school during a snow day brings back a lot of memories of online school that I'd rather leave in the past."

- Mia Soderlund

This is a new technique that has not yet had to be used by SPS but has created some mixed reactions.

Every year, it is common to get one or two snow days. Snow days offer a break from the routine of daily life and can provide an opportunity for rest, relaxation and quality time with loved ones.

When many students think about having online

school during a snow day, it isn't the most favorable situation. Sophomore Jameson Allensworth agrees with this conclusion.

"In the event of having enough snow in Seattle, we should get the snow day and be able to feel like a kid again because it's rare and doesn't happen that often," Allensworth said.

The shift to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has forced schools to adapt to new technology and teaching methods. Many classes require a computer or device of some sort on a daily basis. Since there was a full year of online school, teachers and students have gotten somewhat comfortable with the process.

This allowed for SPS to feel confident in their decision to go further with this strategy in the case of snow.

Sophomore Mia Soderlund weighs the pros and cons of online snowdays, illustrating that just because students understand how to do online school, it doesn't mean they want to do it again.

"Having to do online school during a snow day brings back a lot of memories of online school that I'd rather leave in the past," Soderlund said. "However, I would much rather have more summer than snow, and although unfortunate, it is a cool way to get a longer summer."

The bright side of this remote learning during a snow day, is that there is the opportunity to never have to add days onto the end of the year.

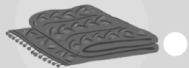
The downside is that snow days can provide a break from the stress and demands of daily life. Taking a day off to relax and enjoy the winter weather can be beneficial for mental health.

SEATTLE'S WEATHER REPORT

AVERAGE SNOW FALL
Seattle typically experiences an average of 5.9 inches of snow per year, according to the National Weather Service.



MOST SNOW FALL RECORDED
The most snowfall recorded in a single day in Seattle was 20 inches



EFFECTS OF SNOW
During a typical Seattle snowstorm, schools and public transportation may be closed or disrupted, and many businesses and offices may also close or adjust their hours.



COST OF SNOW STORM
According to the Seattle Times, the cost of a major snowstorm in Seattle can be anywhere from \$2 million to \$10 million in terms of cleanup, damage repairs, and lost revenue for businesses.



(Penelope Neireiter)

Impacts of COVID on education

Language Art teacher Taryn Coe shares her thoughts on the pandemic and changes in student behavior

Jill Sousley Staff Reporter

As we approach three years since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, the educational and school environment still has yet to feel normal. Many administrators, staff and students share the feeling that the lasting effects of the pandemic may never go away.

Language arts teacher Taryn Coe expresses her thinking on how COVID-19 has impacted high school education, and what she has done to combat certain negative influences on students caused by the pandemic.

"I have noticed that students seem less sociable, less willing to talk to each other," Coe wrote over email. "They seem more drawn to their phones. When we have down time in class, students typically

go to their phones instead of talking with friends."

Being online, many students were robbed of the ability to socialize properly with others, and this is currently causing disconnect in the classroom. Restricted access to in-person activities, and students' everyday lives being disrupted back in 2020, contributed to this current disconnect.

Coe shares some ways she deals with these impacts in the classroom.

"I provide more thinking and individual writing opportunities before asking students to share with their groups because students seem less comfortable sharing right off the bat," Coe wrote.

She provides more small group discussion as an option because most students don't seem to feel as comfortable talking as a whole class. While COVID-19 severely impacted some students, others liked or didn't mind online school. Some students don't feel the lasting impacts as much as others. Coe saw this variation in online school experience exemplified by freshmen in her class.

"Some thrived and some really struggled," Coe wrote.

Since some students didn't struggle as much as others, Coe says she tries to see each student as an individual and address their needs as such. Coe says that this change in teaching style is due to her experiences during the pandemic.

"I think COVID has forced both teachers and students to be more flexible," Coe wrote. "Before online school, I was much more 'go-go-go' and I think that caused stress for students."

The pandemic forced many teachers to modify their lessons or teaching styles to fit students' needs when everyone began in-person learning again. Students and teachers alike were forced to work with each other and find a medium that worked for everyone.

Coe expressed that she thinks slowing things down was one positive effect that came out of online school. Some may say that students get special treatment or that the workload is too light, but after a worldwide pandemic, some students and teachers argue that these adjustments were necessary considering the circumstances.

"These days I really try to meet students where they're at, and work with them as individuals, instead of insisting that every student have the same experience and meet the same standard. I think COVID has forced both teachers and students to be more flexible," Coe wrote.

March 16, 2020

COVID-versary

to March 16, 2023

(Sadie Clark)

Students visit Maui on ecology trip

Biannual Hawaii trip returns for the first time since quarantine

Piper Sorensen Staff Reporter



Ecology students learn about native medicinal plants, such as Kukui, at Maui Nui Botanical Gardens. (Arden Rathkopf)

Visiting Hawai'i might sound more like a dream than a high school science trip. But science teacher Noam Gundle continues to make it a reality. Thanks to his diligent planning and organization, Ballard has had a history of ecology trips to the island of Maui. This year, the trip was Feb. 20 to March 4. The 2023 group of sophomores, juniors, seniors and chaperones amassed around 50, affectionately dubbed the “ohana”, meaning family in Hawaiian.

“I have been wanting to do trips like this my whole career,” Gundle said. “I was inspired to teach by my mentor Craig Macgowan who pioneered the Maui trip in the late 1970s.”

Gundle's inspiration from Macgowan, coupled with his student experience on a early-90s Florida trip taken by Garfield High School, inspired him to adopt the trip for Ballard. Previous Maui trips have taken place in 2014, 2018 and 2020. The 2023 trip is the first one after COVID: an accomplishment that students don't take lightly. Seniors on the trip were grateful that the opportunity arose in their final year.

“I'm ecstatic,” senior Olivia Hall said. “It was such a wonderful experience and I'm so happy that everyone who went got to go.”

And as for the activities? Some of the favorites were snorkeling, outrigger canoeing, surfing and of course, swimming. The mid-70s weather was a more than welcome change from raining or snowing Seattle, and students took advantage of it every day.

“I really loved snorkeling, especially at Makena Bay,” sophomore Carolyn Reid said. “It was super cool to see turtles and all the coral underwater.”

The “ohana” went snorkeling almost every day, with different locations each time. Students also had the luck of seeing turtles, or honu, while snorkeling, along with breaching whales. Students were impressed by all the other marine

life too, such as a variety of sea stars and anemones.

Every day began early— once even as early as 3 a.m. for the Mount Haleakala climb— and everyone always had something fun to do, from preparing and eating food to relaxing on the beach. There was a lot of togetherness, which did drain some people's social batteries, but overall the “ohana” enjoyed each other's company.

“Everyone was so sweet,” junior Ella Leung said. “The community we had as a group made even the long car rides and homework time eventful and fun.”

Homework time was given every other night so students could keep up with their work. The WiFi wasn't the best and it was pretty distracting in the full room of people chatting, but students made it work. Some seniors even applied to the University of Hawai'i on a whim.

When the final day came, students celebrated and went to a lū'au - a traditional Hawaiian party. There was a feast featuring pork, poke and more, alongside a performance done by fire throwers and hula dancers. Everyone soaked up the last bit of Maui they could before our departure early the next day.

The trip ended with a flight back to Seattle with science projects in the works for everyone. Students may have left Hawai'i and returned to 40 degree weather, but their “ohana” remains.



The “ohana” hike along a stream through Olowalu Valley. (Arden Rathkopf)

Silicon Valley Bank Collapse

Silicon Valley Bank collapsed on March 10, the largest bank to fail since the 2008 financial crisis. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (F.D.I.C.) took over the bank, providing federal control over customer deposits. The F.D.I.C. has a coverage limit of \$250,000. Many of Silicon Valley Bank's clients are tech startups, and their accounts exceed that limit, so emergency measures have been approved by Congress to cover beyond \$250,000 to limit panic and further economic problems.

Oscars set records

“Everything Everywhere All at Once” swept the Academy Awards on March 12. Michelle Yeoh became the first Asian to win Best Actress for her lead role as Evelyn. Supporting actor Ke Huy Quan won the first Oscar given to a Vietnamese-born performer for his role as Waymond. The film itself, featuring a mostly Asian cast and a same-sex love story, won the big award, Best Picture. The film won seven total Oscars of its 11 nominations, including Best Directing, Best Original Screenplay, Best Film Editing and Best Supporting Actress.

News-in-Brief

Sadie Clark News Editor

Alaska's Willow Project fought by environmental groups

The Biden administration is going forward on the Willow Project in Alaska. This \$8 billion oil drilling project could help stabilize oil prices in the U.S., but environmental groups have staged several protests against the environmental impact the project would have: 9.2 million metric tons of carbon pollution annually. This is not in line with the Biden administration's climate goals, and environmental groups will likely challenge the project in court. The drilling would take place inside The National Petroleum Reserve spans 23 million acres, the largest expanse of pristine land in the country.

Texas Lawsuit on abortion rights

Five women are suing Texas over abortion bans that prevented them from ending pregnancies with medical risks to both themselves and their fetuses. The lawsuit is backed by the Center for Reproductive Rights, an abortion-rights group. The majority of Americans are currently in support of legalized abortions, particularly when a pregnancy presents medical danger. The court will be asked to permit physicians to make exceptions for dangerous pregnancies. After the Dobbs decision overturned Roe v. Wade, very few exceptions have been made for endangered women in states who, like Texas, have banned abortions.

The equitability of an honors track

Staff discussions spurs conversations on racism in academics

Hazel Engstrom Staff Reporter

When registering for classes, students have to choose between honors and core. In some classes, honors means that students have a few more homework questions or a longer test, while in others the core and honors tracks are separated entirely. The end result though, is the same. Everyone gets a small “H” on their transcript.

Recently, staff met to discuss the possibility of a standardized honors policy across departments, with a focus on providing rigorous courses for students while continuously promoting equity within the school.

However, with the designation of honors

HCC Current Enrollment vs. District Eligible		
Race of students	Enrolled	Eligible
Black/African American	92 (1.8%)	8130 (15.0%)
Indigenous American	0 (0%)	227 (0.4%)
Asian	663 (13.4%)	7,100 (13.1%)
White	3118 (63.2%)	24,670 (45.6%)
Latinx	259 (5.25%)	7,085 (13.1%)
Multicultural	799 (16.2%)	6,625 (12.2%)
Pacific Islander	1 (0.02%)	218 (0.4%)
Total	4932	54090

*Data courtesy of Seattle public schools.

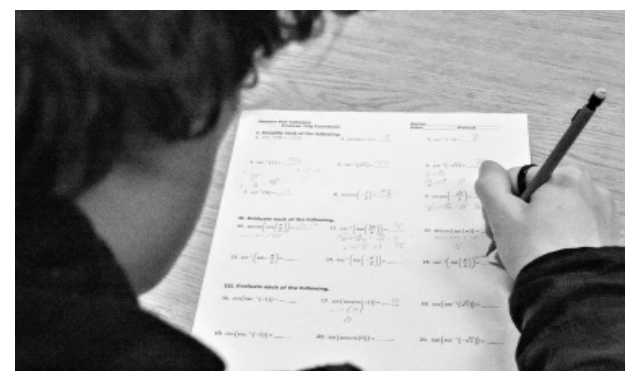
(Hazel Engstrom)

programs dating back to the redlining and structural racism that took place early during the foundation of Seattle Public Schools, concern has been raised over the best way to reform a program which began as a vessel for segregation.

“I think it’s important from a social justice perspective to realize that our schools were developed and structured in order to further the tenants of white supremacy culture,” April McKenna, a language arts teacher, said. “The HCC (Highly Capable Cohort) program here in Seattle Public Schools, of which honors classes are an outcropping of ... was specifically designed to keep white parents from pulling their kids out of Seattle Public Schools.”

As a result, public high schools in Seattle along with public high schools across the country have reported high numbers of white students in honors, with students of color remaining disproportionately underrepresented in advanced learning tracks, according to the United States Department of Education.

“If you look at the raw data of who ends up in an AP or an honors class at Ballard, you will see differences in terms of the demographics there,” Janine Logsdon, a math teacher and Math Department Head, said. “The Ballard high school honors/AP program is not alone in this issue



In some classes, honors means that students have a few more homework questions or a longer test. (Arden Rathkopf)

[however]. We exist in a society that has systemic racism.”

In an effort to combat this trend, the Math Department at Ballard has adopted a policy of mixed honors and core classes at the freshman and sophomore grade levels as a way to introduce students towards more challenging topics.

“What we try to do is kind of break down that system and help more students see themselves as advanced learners,” Logsdon said. “Hopefully that results in change over time.”

The Language Arts Department on the other hand has a total “honors for all policy” which, beyond mixed classes, allows every freshman and sophomore student the opportunity to earn honors credit regardless of whether they signed up for it.

“When you present an honors-for-all system, I think you’re saying that you believe that all of your students are honors students,” McKenna said.

Staff professional development covers emergency reaction strategies

Guest speakers introduce various methods of conflict resolution and personal self care during staff crisis training

Sadie Clark News Editor

The Purple Professional Development (PD) team held a crisis training for staff on Feb. 8. Guest speakers from the SPS Department of Coordinated School Health presented to the Ballard staff on reacting in crisis, social-emotional learning (SEL) and restorative practices.

The Purple PD team, made up of members of administration and teachers, helped to choose the topic based on the perceived needs of the staff.

A meeting on crisis training seemed particularly important to staff and the team in the wake of the Ingraham High School shooting. David Fort, a member of Purple PD and assistant principal, spoke to this.

“We recognize that crises are things that happen regularly within a large school such as ours,” Fort said. “After the situation that happened at Ingraham this year..., we wanted to make sure that our staff had some time to think about how they might respond in the midst of [a] crisis.”

A crucial emphasis of the training was on maintaining staff’s own mental health in response to crises.

“It was talking through breathing practices, and thinking through how you take care of yourself before you take care of others,” Fort said. “The airline analogy was named; make sure that you get your own mask on first before you put the mask on others, to make sure that you can be effective in the moment of crisis,” Fort said.

Some of the techniques involved within the crisis-response portion included the three R’s—regulate, relate, respond—and the three C’s—calm,

communicate and coach—as well as a five-senses grounding exercise. For some of the staff, the exercises seemed underwhelming. Kristen Storey, member of Purple PD and the head of the ELA department, illustrated some of these concerns.

“I had heard from some colleagues [that] it seemed kind of elementary. You know, like, and that’s the challenge the district faces anytime they go out to present. The district is looking out for K-12. K is not 12,” Storey said. “It’s too big of an expanse. So I think sometimes they struggle with how to adjust [and] adapt.”

Another frustration about the crisis training was the lack of specificity. While methods of reaction were explored, the crises remained unnamed. Fort felt that having narratives around what to do in any sort of situation was valuable regardless, especially because of the unpredictability of different types of emergencies.

Beyond practices of maintaining mental wellbeing, Storey felt it may be helpful to have more information on protocol for specific crises.

“I tend to be very practical, so in a practical realm, I think it’d be helpful if I knew what Ballard protocol was [if] we do have an active shooter,” Storey said. “What did we learn from Ingraham in terms of how [to] contact families? How do we get students back to families?”

Besides the situation of gun violence on campus, another reason for the staff crisis training pertained to ongoing sexual assault and harassment issues.

“Last year, [during] the sexual assault walkout, the students were speaking to something, [and] we wanted to make sure that we were being

responsive,” Fort said.

The last section of the staff crisis training was delegated to restorative practices, a conflict resolution method SPS has taught for years.

“[Restorative practices] are... about resolving problems of any type, whether it’s a student–student conflict, or student–teacher conflict or a parent [conflict], in a very respectful, collaborative way, so they’re not punitive. You don’t get punished for misspeaking in class in a way that offended a student, for example,” Storey said.

Storey believes that restorative practices may have been especially helpful in context of the sexual assault sit in during the fall of 2021.

“I think had we had some sort of restorative practice procedure in place, it could have been really powerful to sit down and talk and hear and strategize,” Storey said. “You know, ‘how are we going to resolve this?’ Frankly, I don’t think it ever got resolved.”

Restorative practices and conflict resolution were some of the methods taught at the training that could also be used in community building at school. While there are only eight professional development meetings for staff throughout the year, Fort and Storey are hopeful for future narratives around crises.

“You don’t necessarily have one training that is going to have this specific outcome,” Fort said. “It just sort of sets the tone. It’s a process of learning and a process of communication, so in the event that there’s issues that arise, people can say, ‘Okay, we’ve had opportunities to connect as a team to think about what we do to respond.’”

Black History Month does not end on Feb. 28

How staff celebrated and empowered student voices for Black Lives Matter at School Week

Olivia Shaer and Alina Zahn Staff Reporters

During Black History Month, students and teachers were given the opportunity to expand on their knowledge of what Black History Month means, especially within the school community. PowerPoint presentations, videos, movies and conversations were the main resources utilized by teachers during the series.

Eileen Yardley delves into the Afro-Latino experience within Black History

Spanish teacher Eileen Yardley used her bilingual skills to teach her students Black history through Afro-Latinos in Spanish.

“I wanted to give my students a contextual picture of Afro-Latinos and their history,” Yardley said.

Yardley worked with the World Language team to find resources for all students at different Spanish levels. She was able to teach herself and her students some of the history of Afro-Latinos.

“I am so fascinated with the history of resistance in Latin American history that I wanted to work to build these materials,” Yardley said.

She believes that there’s always more to be done to increase racial equity.

“The principles should be posted around the school, and it should be translated in various languages, and we as a school could easily highlight one or two each month and talk about what it means to be empathetic in our classrooms,” Yardley said.

Brook Brayman presents elements of Black culture via music and the videos that accompany them.

Brook Brayman, AP English Language and Composition teacher, used music to share an aspect of underappreciated Black culture.

Brayman feels music was a better way to get the Black History Month’s themes (joy and strength) across.

Through sharing different Black artists and their music videos, Brayman allowed his students to grasp a new point of view on what these songs mean.

“Music allows us to talk about some of the broader issues,” Brayman said.

He came up with a curriculum that worked for him through collaboration with the most important voices.

“Students’ input and encouragement was very important and valuable,” he said.

He feels that there is an added pressure on the language and history teachers, as their classes are built on ideals regarding racial equity.

Brayman feels that the school must initiate conversations to continue encouraging the department chairs to go to the BLM principles to discuss what could be improved.



Brook Brayman teaches his students about Black American music and literature. (Josie Fitzpatrick)

Taryn Coe introduces new methods for presenting info to underclassmen

English teacher Taryn Coe took an approach not seen in most classrooms this year.

“We did reflecting [in] small group discussions,” she said.

They began the week with poetry analysis.

“We did a spoken word piece by Nikita Oliver,” Coe said.

Nikita Oliver is a politician, poet and educator. They were a candidate for mayor of Seattle in the 2017 mayoral election

Coe took the extra time to teach her students about Black Lives Matter (BLM) and its female founders.

“A lot of students didn’t know that BLM In Schools originated in Seattle which was surprising, as an educator,” Coe said.

She looked through each of the districts provided resources, but found her own lesson plans to be more efficient in the long run.

“I had trouble finding resources that would be coherent with students within the district provided resources,” she said.

Coe also has consistently been a staff member that’s been advocating for changes within the current English language arts curriculum.

“I make a bit of effort to decolonize my curriculum, and when I do go out of my way to create accessible materials for situations like Black History Month, I make sure to connect it to at least one element of our current unit,” Coe said.

Joe Schmidt discusses personal experiences in regards to racial inequality

Math teacher Joe Schmidt felt that in addition to PowerPoints and videos about BLM, conversations between students and teachers about personal experiences are necessary.

He understands the value of slowing down and using a mix of personal and district-selected resources to expose students to new information around Black History Month and beyond.

“I introduced my students to a different Black mathematician throughout all five days of the week,” Schmidt said.

He also found some of the collaborative resources helpful.

“I found some district resources put together by other teachers from other schools like Nathan Hale,” Schmidt said. “The source I used was very germane to my statistics class so I didn’t have to move too far away from what we had been doing.”

He feels that we could be doing more, but that having discussions like this in class is a wonderful start.

Malik Prince summarizes the month’s challenges and successes

Malik Prince, a coach and Black Student Union (BSU) faculty adviser, had several thoughts about how the month went as a whole.

“For the most part, the change was trying to be there but it was still mostly similar to years past,” Prince said.

Prince worked with several club members after the BLM week had concluded to reflect on what went well and what didn’t.

“According to most kids I have talked to, most teachers did not go out of their way to teach personalized and engaging lessons,” he said. “We need to find a way to keep these messages going throughout the year.”

He has been informed about several of the common lessons, and found himself unimpressed.

“Teachers are attempting to engage students with information that most of them already know and have known for years,” Prince said.

To alter these patterns, Prince believes that the school must start with the basics.

“We need far more student-led meetings to generate a better understanding and expand on the basics of Black history rather than falling back on the same three lessons about Martin Luther King Jr. and redlining,” Prince said.



ASB made several announcements about the purpose of Black Lives Matter at School Week. (Josie Fitzpatrick)



Positive Masculinity Club meets Wednesdays at lunch in SW106. (Courtesy of Karim Rifai)

Positive Masculinity Club

Olivia Schaer Staff Reporter

Often, students aim to project awareness around issues regarding gender. Junior Karim Rifai sought to provide a space where students have the opportunity to discuss issues regarding traditional masculinity and femininity. He succeeded, and the Positive Masculinity Club became official.

The club meets every Wednesday during lunch and has a loose structure where students can engage in thought-provoking conversations with friends that still feel fun.

Rifai selected ELA teacher Brook Brayman as the club's adviser.

"He is a very vocal teacher, which is what originally drew me to him," Rifai said. "He is right on the line of [being] controversial, but manages to balance what he says with what he means."

Rifai has faith in Brayman's abilities as an adviser.

"He is actually a great adviser," Rifai said. "You know how most advisers sit back and let the clubs go through their activities? Well, Brayman finds a way to be involved with all of our discussions without completely stealing our attention."

As far as the club's long-term goals go:

"We are trying to create some type of service project," Rifai said. "Mr. Brayman ... suggested creating a service project, in fact he says that he is encouraging all of his clubs to commit to some form of community service."

Rifai started the club initially for his own self-betterment but started to learn about the culture around masculinity among the student body.

"The club is here to encourage traditionally positive masculine traits like bravery or strength," Rifai said. "The most important thing to me is to run a space for everyone, not just people using gendered pronouns."

He reached beyond to explain the core values and conversations held by the club.

"Femininity and masculinity are rooted in what we think men and women should be, but what we should be has evolved so much," Rifai said.

Rifai used himself as an example.

"I try to maintain both traditionally masculine and feminine traits as I move through my [days]," he said.

Rifai felt it important to disclose that the club has conversed about last year's open discussion on sexual assault amongst students on campus. He felt that this topic is of utmost importance within the concept of toxic masculinity in contrast with positive masculinity.

"I think at Ballard people tend to use masculinity to justify bad behavior, and that's something we often discuss during club," Rifai said.

He believes that in order to achieve gender equality, no one should get flack for being proud of their masculinity.

Living with curiosity: a teacher's story

Kristina Katrel traveled a unique path to pursue her interests and find her community

Marley Helfer Copy Editor

She has a love for reading and writing, so much so that she was kicked out of her language arts class in high school for reading too much.

In high school, she wrote a novel a month for her friend and essays on random Russian poets. She was a multi-sport athlete, with gymnastics at the center of her interests.

Behind the energetic and passionate English Language Arts teacher, Kristina Katrel's story is one that not many students are familiar with. Katrel followed a path of persistence and ambition to explore her interests and find the right community.

From her childhood to life after high school, Katrel's world was marked by travel.

After growing up in the deep South, Katrel moved to Eastern Washington for high school.

For Katrel, athletics were a large part of her identity growing up. Katrel was a diver, a gymnast and a runner for cross-country, ending up competing in the 100-meter high hurdles for college.

"I was absolutely a sports nerd," she said. "I don't play any team sports because I don't like to share and I really don't like to let people down, so I only did individual sports."

While her athletics had shaped her journey, it was another passion that would ultimately influence her path.

"It's probably not surprising that I loved to write and read," she said.

However, her path through high school wasn't perfect, she shared.

"I was a terrible high school student, I mean, really terrible," she said. "I would spend a lot of time looking out the window and drawing and writing."

This actually allowed her to explore her interests even more, giving her an outlet to read and write.

After attending schools that weren't the right fit for her, she would finally find her community abroad in England.

"People were silly and engaging," Katrel said. "[They] were living a big life where people traveled and talked about really cool ideas, but weren't afraid of individual education."

After her time in England, she felt the need for a change and to return to her hobbies and interests.

"You can't hike in England," she said. "There's nowhere to ride your bike, there's nowhere to swim, there's nowhere even to really run unless you're running in the city and then you get black congestion up your nose."

In addition to the limitations she faced with athletics, Katrel felt that English culture generally wasn't the right fit.

"English girls wanted to smoke and shop and talk about interior magazines, and I just wanted to do sports and talk about books," she said.

Because of family connections, Katrel decided to move to the Pacific Northwest.

Now a teacher at BHS, Katrel has developed new perspectives on teaching, all of which are symbolic of her compassion for her students.

"As I've gotten older and as my children have grown, I think high school is so much more about belonging and creating a feeling of safety and community," she said. "We don't need to push kids in this rat race anymore. Maybe we can just have fun and have a good time learning."

Katrel has made her way to Ballard, bringing with her a lifetime of travel, change and deep care for her students.

"I wish that students understood," she said. "We are not the general of the army, we are on the front lines with them."



Katrel followed a path of persistence and ambition to explore her interests and find the right community. After high school, she attended six different universities both in and out of the United States. (Josie Fitzpatrick)

The risks of playing high school football

While some athletes are willing to risk their all to play, injuries remain ordinary

Amare Srinivasan Staff Reporter

Football possesses different meanings for different people. Whether you watch them, play for fun, or play professionally, a different meaning is presented. Many athletes can feel that sports are their life, and that they're willing to risk everything in order to play, others may feel that they're just doing it to get exercise or money. However, no matter what level you're playing at, football presents a major risk among athletes.

On Jan. 2, the football world was struck with one of the scariest moments in sports history. In the middle of the first quarter, 24-year-old Bills safety Damar Hamlin collapsed on the field and couldn't be woken up. As the football community watched in horror, Hamlin was unconscious and had to be taken off the field in an ambulance. Miraculously, Hamlin survived through this and is now in good spirits, it was found that he suffered a cardiac arrest on the field and a rare appearance of Commotio Cordis had occurred where a sudden blow to the chest caused cardiac damage. The football community came together supportively and were in complete distress following this. However, despite Hamlin's incident not being related to the head and neck area, damages in football can be far worse. Whether it's peewee, high school, college or professional football, there are always risks.

Unlike professional football, high school and college athletes don't receive pay for playing. Head and face concussions are the most common type of injury in high school football while players are also four times more likely to sustain a concussion in football games than while playing men's basketball. Ballard sophomore, and football player Lake Christensen shared his perspective on the entire matter.

"It's very unfortunate what happened with Hamlin. Fortunately, it is a very uncommon occurrence but all sports come with risks. It's too bad that football is still perceived as such a dangerous sport because it's come a long way in terms of safety in recent years," Christensen said. "I can see why some new people or spectators can feel uneasy in light of the incident, however what happened was incredibly rare and especially at the



Joe Farley (11) sports a Riddell helmet in a game against Roosevelt. According to the National Health Institute, on average, football players receive 14.3 head impacts per game. (Tom Fathi)

high school level, injuries aren't super common and shouldn't be the deciding factor in someone's opinion on the sport. I believe there is always a constant chance of injury but it's worth the risk when you're as passionate as I feel I am."

Christensen had a strong opinion on how football was advancing its ways of safety.

"New Riddle and Vicis helmets are much safer than the helmets from 20-30 years ago, when I'm playing the only thing that's going through my head is the play," Christensen said. "I feel that injuries bring teams closer together, it's unfortunate and sad when they happen but are always a reminder that we're playing for each other as a team to get better."

Some high school players, including Christensen, feel that they're willing to risk almost anything to play the sport they love. However someone who played, as well as coached on a different level had a relatively different perspective.

Kaleb Germinaro, former Ballard wide receivers coach and former college player at the University of Pennsylvania, had some deep inputs on the situation.

"When I was in college, I was working out in the gym and collapsed due to MS which I hadn't been diagnosed with before. I had to be put in an ambulance and felt like the Hamlin situation was sorta reminiscent of that for me. I'm in a group chat with my college teammates and we were texting about it," Germinaro said. "Me and alot of my friends growing up loved the aspect of the game and what it can do. A hundred people trying to work towards one goal together on a team. There are lots of risks as far as physically, mentally and lots of other things wrong with it. However I don't enjoy the emphasis on negative effects."

In terms of how the game changes and can be changed due to injuries, Germinaro did agree that there will be advancements in safety.

"We now use helmet covers during practice, I think they might eventually start wearing them in games in order to make it safer and protect people from head injuries. If your kid wants to play, as a parent do your research, be familiar with injuries, talk with the coaches and build a plan," Germinaro

said. "When I was playing, I definitely got worried when injuries happened. People often forget that athletes know each other and have a different level of empathy, and relationships with teammates." A few years after his college days, Germinaro coached the WR group at Ballard.

One of the new wide receivers from last year, sophomore Luke Peffer decided to stop playing the game he loved following his freshman year.

"I started playing touch/flag football when I was 6 but wasn't allowed to play actual tackle football until freshman year. I fell in love with watching it, playing it and just being involved with football in general. I think the first time the injuries crossed my mind was when Teddy Bridgewater was knocked unconscious for the Vikings and it kinda made me realize that it wasn't just a fun game, it was way more brutal," Peffer said. "I was watching the Hamlin play with my dad and originally we didn't think it would be that bad. I just think these injuries have been so normalized in football. It's hard to support a sport where people's lives are at risk at all times and can often get severe brain damage. I also think the management of injuries needs to be handled much better and that already injured players shouldn't be put in positions of risk. However there definitely does seem to be research and development of products to help keep football players safe which is great to see."

Reflecting on the year he played for Ballard, Peffer had some first hand experiences with the injury scares. "I like to think that I'm a pretty good player but once I knew it was unlikely that I'd go pro, it wasn't worth it to me to put myself at risk like that," Peffer said. "I think injuries affect the environment of a team. When I was playing at Ballard I would have friends get hit, and you could tell that they weren't fully there for a few seconds when they got up. Seeing this happen right in front of me and being passed over so quickly was terrifying."

Injuries in football are no joke no matter the level of play, and need to be taken seriously. In order to keep athletes safe, adjustments must be made.

Football Head Injuries by the numbers

NFL concussion rates are 6.9 times higher than the concussion rates of pro baseball, hockey, soccer, and basketball combined.

110 out of 111 NFL players' and 48 out of 53 former college players' brains showed signs of CTE in a 2017 study by researchers at Boston University

The NFL has pledged 100 million dollars towards helmet engineering

Better performing helmets have contributed to a 25% reduction of concussions over the last 4 NFL seasons

Waiting for spring to ... spring!



Little joys of March

Annie Welman Editor-in-Chief

New blooms

Of all Seattle spring flowers, there are none quite as quintessential as the cherry trees beginning to bloom throughout the city. Seattleites and tourists alike flock to the UW campus to see the pink blooms, which typically reach their peak in late March. Luckily for Ballard students, BHS has some of its own cherry trees, who's buds are just starting to burst.

Beyond the cherry trees, there is an assortment of other early spring blooms popping up around Ballard. Hellebores were some of the first to arrive, providing some welcome hints of purple amidst brown garden beds. Then came the tiny clumps of crocuses, accompanied by a slew of daffodils. Though some of these flowers were quickly met by early March frost after they emerged, they brightened parking strips even during bouts of sleet and hail. Dwarf irises and currants popped out as well, along with the occasional tulips and magnolia flowers.

In the upcoming months, Seattleites have rhododendrons, dogwoods, azaleas and other colorful blooms to look forward to. Perhaps these blossoms can carry students to spring break, brightening walks to and from school and making it a little bit more enjoyable to stare out classroom windows.

Baby rabbits

For gardeners desperately trying to protect spring flowers from rabbit nibbles, this might not count as a spring "joy." That said, it's hard to truly hate baby bunnies. Overpopulation aside, the fuzzy bundles of fur hopping through the neighborhood are often a lovely surprise.

Rabbit breeding season begins in February, and continues through March and into summer. Whether people prefer crocuses or the rabbits that feed on them, there will be an influx of both this time of year.

Migratory birds

Though bird feeders in Seattle are filled year-round with everything from hummingbirds to chickadees, March marks the very beginning of bird migration season. The peak season won't take place until May, when nearly 260 thousand birds will fly over King County each night, but until then the permanent resident Steller's jays, house finches and others will keep Seattle company as the migratory birds join in.

Once spring is in full swing, tanagers, grosbeaks and warblers, along with a number of shorebirds passing through the Pacific Flyway, will pass over Washington. Maybe a hawk will even snatch a pesky rabbit or two and save a few flowers from becoming bunny snacks.

Spring Playlist

Editorial Board

Though this playlist may not be for everyone, no playlist could encompass the eclectic music tastes of all students. Instead, here is an assortment of songs that students feel are reminiscent of the season. Whether these songs are familiar or not, take a listen and try them out!

'Spud Infinity' by Big Thief

If there is ever a time to embrace the inherent silliness of humankind, it is spring. Our most basic desires are exposed, from gazing at budding flowers, to opting for a picnic rather than a traditional lunch. "Spud Infinity" encapsulates how everyone, on the most basic level, is the same. Just a silly human "baking too long in the sun of spud infinity."

'Today' by John Denver

As leaves begin to grow back on trees, it is more important than ever to live in the present. In "Today," John Denver sings of the joys found in our lives, however small they may seem from the taste of strawberries to sleeping in a field of clovers.

'White Rabbit' by Jefferson Airplane

Spring is a time of feeling big and small, just like Alice. As nature wields her long-awaited display of life, we're left understanding both our own insignificance and the simultaneous grandeur of our own existences. Besides, spring is nothing if not the season of the Hookah-Smoking Caterpillar.

'Velvet Elvis' by Kacey Musgraves

The whole "Golden Hour" album feels revelatory in its joy, the same way spring does. It's a celebration of joy after pain, light after dark. "Velvet Elvis," while less centered on nature than other parts of the album, remains an upbeat and nostalgic song, perfect for spring.

'26' by Caamp

Despite the barren, leafless trees and snow on the album cover, this song manages to feel distinctly spring-like. It brings out the same uncomplicated joy that spring can inspire, complete with stories of walking barefoot on the beach and taking in the smell of rain. After all, if this were truly a winter song, no one would be moving to Alaska.

Spring Activities

Maisy Clunies-Ross Opinions Editor

Yellow and purple buds burst through the soft dark soil, quickly shooting up into full daffodil and crocus blooms. Clouds and fog give way to sunshine and light showers. Delicate pink cherry blossoms and vibrant leaves grace the branches of trees that have long lain bare. Like the petals that fall from trees or a soft morning mist, spring is in the air. For Seattleites who spent the past few months cooped up inside, hiding from the dark and dreary winter, it's difficult to remember what the warmth of the sun felt like, let alone to remember how to enjoy it. Fortunately, the Ballard community has shared some of their favorite ways to enjoy spring.

Hiking

For those who are willing to brave the muddy trails, hiking is a great way to enjoy the weather. New life, like green sprouts, colorful buds and newborn animals are all around. These changes can be fun to observe on hikes with friends or alone. As corny as it may sound or feel, taking a step back from the hustle and bustle of everyday life to serenely enjoy the beauty of nature and reflect can be very beneficial.

Picnicking

After months of icy park benches and visible breath, it's finally warm enough to eat outside without shivering so hard speaking is impossible. There's no better way to celebrate this change than with a picnic! Ditch the hot drinks and hearty soups of winter for the light tea cookies and cucumber sandwiches of spring. Trade puffy coats and sweatpants for t-shirts and sundresses.

Polar Plunge

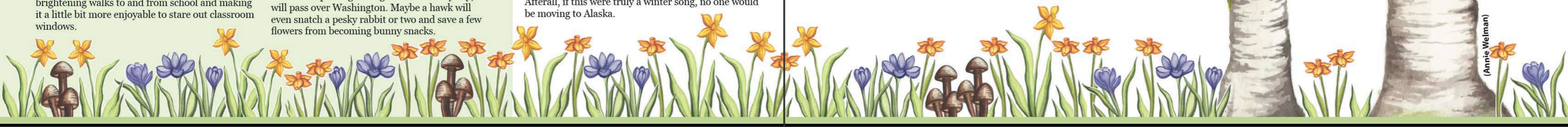
Although jumping into frigid water can sound unpleasant or daunting, polar plunges can be an invigorating addition to a day. While it is usually still too chilly to lay out on a towel and tan, putting on a swimsuit and going to the beach is still reminiscent of a summer's day. Grabbing blankets and piling into a warm car afterwards adds an element of coziness that makes polar plunges the perfect transition from winter to summer.

Biking

Biking offers a relaxing way to enjoy the breezy but bright spring weather while getting some exercise. Serious cyclists may enjoy long trips and many hills, however the difficulty of a bike ride can be adjusted for any level of experience or commitment. There are flat routes in parks and bike trails around the city for those looking for a run ride without much exertion.

Field Games

Like a picnic, field games harken back to the simple childhood joy spring once held. Getting together with a group of friends or a sports team to play games like capture the flag can ignite a spirit of playfulness and friendly competition for all those involved.



(Annie Welman)

Winter sports in review

James Liska *Sports Editor*

Wrestling

This season, the Beavers' wrestling team greatly expanded in size and consistently performed well in dual meets and tournaments as a result of their heavy conditioning and intense practices.

Between boys and girls wrestling, five wrestlers qualified for state: Jackie Benson, Cass Sylves, Ben Kildal, Simón Moreno and Miles Price. Also going to state as alternates were James Goodall, Tommy Megal, Lazlo Davis-Rudin and Hayden Wiggins.

Junior wrestler Rishab Nagarkar described a typical practice: "We start with a 10 minute jog around the school, then we go to the mats, do a bit of stretching, then it's hard drilling in each position, and sometimes our coach shows us a new move. We end with 15 to 30 minutes of live [wrestling]," said Nagarkar. "All the coaches are awesome. They push you and make you hate practice, but once you're on the mat it really feels like they're there to support you."

Senior Captain Cass Sylves emphasized the importance of conditioning to the team's success.

"I would say we do more conditioning than most wrestling teams in the city, and that has really helped our mentality and endurance during our matches," said Sylves. "It takes 1,000 reps to master something, so our coaches stress heavy repetition on things we already know."

Gymnastics

The beavers gymnastics team had yet another outstanding season. They went undefeated in the regular season, won the metro league title for the second time in a row, placed second in the district championships and placed fourth at the state championships with their season high score. Seven players competed at the state championships, including juniors Naomi Kildal and Alex Bullock who placed 9th and 10th all-around.

Their season's achievements were due to hard work and a tight community within the team.

"We have a really good team dynamic. There's a lot of intrateam support; we're a really good team inside and out," senior captain Taylor Whetsel said.

Every day after school, the team set up their equipment in the gym, including wrestling mats, beams, bars, and a vault before their intense three hour practices.

According to Whetsel, the most difficult part of the season for the team was enduring the sport's taxing nature.

Nonetheless, the team's efforts paid off with excellent results in regular and postseason meets.

Bowling

In their first ever season, the Beavers' bowling team led by head coach Scott Cachopo was instantly competitive in the pre-existing league and sent two bowlers to state: seniors Lilly



Blanchet wrestler "cutting" Ballard wrestler Miles Price as Price looks to take advantage of any openings. (Arden Rathkopf)

Toland and Jill Sousley.

According to senior bowler Sonja Miller, most of the bowlers were new to the sport and appreciated it as a new competitive challenge.

"The season was fun; it was good to try out a new sport," said Miller. "The most memorable moment was when we beat Prep. We tied them and then we had to go into overtime, which, in bowling, just means you play another round."

On Feb. 14 at eighth grade choices night, many incoming ninth graders expressed interest in joining the bowling team, so the team is projected to grow in the coming seasons.

Boys Swim and Dive

Boys swim and dive had a strong season marked by a large underclassman turnout, consistent improvement throughout the year, and postseason success.

Backstroker Kian Vae'ena, breaststroker Evan Mast, butterflyer Kyle Chew and freestyler Nathan Williams ended the season with a new school record of 1:40.93 in the medley relay at the state meet. Head coach Kyle Morean was awarded Metro League Coach of the Year.

This year's team was led by Senior Captains Leonard Paya, Finn Keenan and Kyle Chew. This trio of captains credits the team's success to challenging practices and a stronger sense of community than in previous seasons.

"We got up really early every morning and just swam," said Chew. "Our coaches pushed us to our limits in practice and we got better every day."

"We had really good attendance this year, and as a group we had better spirit," Paya said, whose behind-the-scenes logistical efforts were vital to the team spirit and organization. "We bonded as a family."

Keenan foresees continued success in the next few seasons. "We have a good coaching system built up, and there are lots of up and coming underclassmen who are going to carry the team," said Keenan.



The swim team poses for a group photo after the Metro meet on Feb. 3, with Coach Kyle Morean posing front and center. (Courtesy of Erika Liska)

Basketball

Competing in the Mountain division, the girls' basketball team struggled in the regular season, but they rallied in the post season to get a couple of big wins and qualify for the district tournament.

Senior captain Diyanka Laemmle attributed the team's resiliency to their solid support system. "Keeping each other accountable and supporting each other worked well," Laemmle said. "We had team dinners at certain players' houses, so those helped bring the team together."

The team also hosted two special events, a Title IX event celebrating women's participation in sports and a "Rally for a Cause" night that raised over 200 pounds of food for the Ballard Food Bank.

Under new head coach Lorenzo Durant III, the boys' basketball team put together a winning season with a record of 10-4 in league play. The team was led by senior captains Jack Swartz, Tom Fathi, Ralph Stinebrickner and junior captain Nirvan Laemmle.

Swartz was awarded first team all metro honors.

According to Stinebrickner, the team established and thrived with "an underdog and undersized identity" in which the team emphasized strong effort on defense and conditioning.

"We all wanted to play defense. We enjoyed it ... for the most part it was what made us win games," Stinebrickner said. "Early in the season, about half of each practice was pure conditioning. Later in the season practices were more about working on plays and defense, but there were times when we needed conditioning and that was all we did for practice."

Senior Max Sevier agreed with Stinebrickner's sentiments about practice: "Our coach [Durant III] has been great, he pushes us hard and it has really helped us succeed this year," Sevier said.



Jack Swartz, Tom Fathi and other Ballard players challenge Franklin for the ball. (Arden Rathkopf)



Shea Deskins and Lidet Becker face off against Garfield. (Maria Fonvielle)



During a timeout, the Beavers talk strategy against their highly-ranked opponent, Garfield. (Maria Fonvielle)

Flag Football

The flag football team had a successful inaugural season led by head coach Laura Lehni, assistant coach Robin Dowdy, and team captains Tristan Cooper and Jennifer Garcia Cruz.

According to senior safety and running back Jaden Helman, as a new team lacking prior experience, they had to learn the sport as they went, performed their best under a simplified playbook. "At the beginning, we had playbooks and the plays were really...complicated, but weirdly enough, football works just fine if you just throw the ... ball and not do all these complicated plays," Helman said.

The team's simplified playbook paid off in their wins against Ingraham and Rainier Beach.

"It's a really fun environment. All the teams show up to Memorial Stadium, and it's like a tournament setting," Helman said. "Hopefully a lot more people will join next year, because we didn't have a very deep roster. It's super fun, and it's not a big time commitment."



Flag football players Ryan Sander, Jennifer Garcia Cruz, Jaden Helman and Tristan Cooper line up pre-snap. (Maria Fonvielle)

‘Cocaine Bear:’ Reagan’s worst nightmare meets wildlife conservation movements

Clyde Curtis Staff Reporter



(IMDB)

Elizabeth Banks’s incredibly loose film adaptation based on a real event, “Cocaine Bear,” is a hilariously-violent over the top comedy starring seasoned actors such as the late Ray Liotta most famously known for his role as Henry Hill in “GoodFellas,” “The Wire’s” Isiah Whitlock Jr., Jesse Tyler Ferguson and Margot Martindale.

The first scene of the film really gets the ball rolling. It starts with a coked up smuggler failing to properly jump out of their plane, hitting his head on the top of the door, killing him and spreading cocaine throughout the forest.

It then cuts to a shot of the protagonist (the bear) consuming a full brick of uncut cocaine. Most of the movie is from the perspective of two kids that skipped school to paint a waterfall, and ending up being chased by the coked up bear and two cocaine dealers, one played by Ice Cube’s son, O’Shea Jackson Jr., and the other played by Alden Ehrenreich.

Most of the run time is filled with graphic violence, comedy and an apex predator taking its toll on mankind. Critics could say that the plot lacked depth, but I think it was perfect for what Banks was trying to do.

The movie doesn’t take itself seriously, and while the acting is great, and the special effects are impressive, the plot is not advanced. The movie doesn’t convey any specific point or message. I think this is what makes “Cocaine Bear” so compelling.

In the current age of cinema, most directors are

going for a profound message that makes the viewer reflect.

In contrast, “Cocaine Bear” is simply just a fun entertaining film that doesn’t require the viewer to reflect or critically think.

One of my favorite scenes in the film is when Margot Martindale (playing a park ranger) accidentally shoots a teenage delinquent inside the ranger store after attempting to kill the bear. Margot Martindale’s performance is great as always, and even in a serious scene like this, it’s set up so well that you can’t help but find it funny.

This is what “Cocaine Bear” does right, taking a traumatizing event like being chased by a coked up apex predator, and not taking it seriously. By the end of the film the viewer is unfazed by the intense violence, and completely desensitized to it.

One wild revelation I had by the end of the movie was that I was rooting for the bear. I think if it was a more serious movie with more character development the viewer would grow more attached to the characters, but by the end me and all my friends were just hoping the bear would find more cocaine and wreak more havoc.

The scene that made me realize I was rooting for the bear was for sure one of the ending scenes. Ray Liotta is paranoid about the millions of dollars lost in cocaine, and thinks the best way to repay the Columbians is to kill the bear and see if they can get any cocaine out of it. I was so worried that the bear was gonna get shot that my heart was pounding and I was praying Ray Liotta would get mauled.

The real “Cocaine Bear” story was much sadder, and less movie worthy. In reality, the 175 pound black bear ingested a large amount of cocaine before quickly overdosing and dying. If you really think about it, it’s tragic that human error caused an animal who would have never been exposed to this drug or been able to comprehend its effect to pass away from it, but this is what makes the film interesting to me.

They took a tragic real story, and got comedy out of it. In summary, I think the film was great, and accomplished everything it should’ve been, that being said, rest in peace cocaine bear.



(Rotten Tomatoes)

A dive into the Quantum Realm

A movie without any direction, riding on the back of the MCU

Evan Sadler Staff Reporter

“Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania” is a garbage movie, but it’s trash in a way that surpasses most Marvel movies. Until now, Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) films have, for the most part, managed to have a blend of emotion, kid-friendly humor and superhero-ing. When they succeed, it’s because these elements are being tastefully pushed to its audience. When they fail, it’s always because they pushed too far in one direction – the movies are either too nostalgic, trying to be too funny or cluttered with boring action sequences, but I’ve never been so dumbfounded by one the way I was by “Quantumania.”

Aside from the relatively brief opening section set in the Marvel present where Scott Lang has written a memoir about his eventful life as Ant-Man and his experiences, much of “Quantumania” takes place in the Quantum Realm, a world that you fall into if you shrink so much that you fall between subatomic particles.

A whole universe of beings exists in the Quantum Realm, with elaborate alien tribes in seemingly constant conflict.

Among them, we learn, is Kang, an erratic traveler whom Janet initially befriended, thinking he was a lost soul who had accidentally wound up in this dimension. It turned out, however, that Kang was a dangerous, imperious, all-powerful being who had been exiled to the Quantum Realm from his own world.

The movie loses its audience from here. Rebel tribes, smugglers, new species and spaceships are introduced, making the movie feel like a knockoff version of George Lucas’s “Star Wars,” but without any creative elements.

The movie just wanders through a psychedelic world, trying to find a magical item to fix all their problems, and is a waste of time, money and attention.

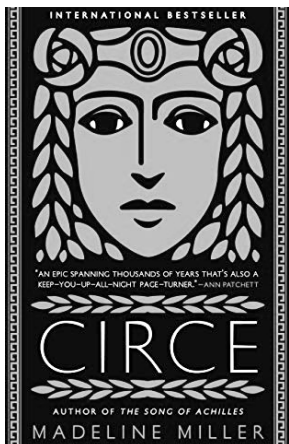


(Rotten Tomatoes)

Women's History Month reading recommendations

Six novels to celebrate the stories of heroines both within and beyond the page

Hazel Engstrom Copy Editor



(Amazon)

'Circe' By Madeline Miller

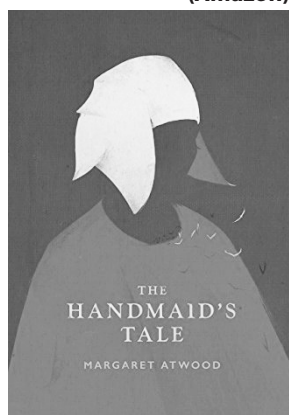
A feminist epic, Madeline Miller's "Circe" takes the story of a vengeful nymph cast aside in Greek myth, and explores her character in a new light set to the familiar background of Homer's "The Odyssey." An exploration of family, power, motherhood and divinity, Circe comes alive through Miller's imaginative eye.



(Amazon)

'Firekeepers Daughter' By Angeline Boulley

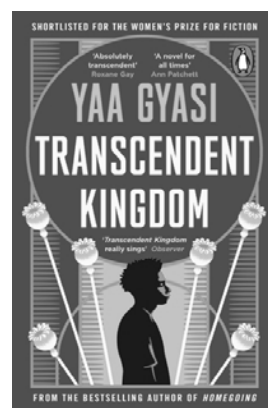
In a fast-paced and thrilling mystery, Boulley explores the struggles of Daunis Fontaine, a biracial member of the Objive tribe, as she struggles to find identity in two contrasting worlds. However after Daunis witnesses a violent murder, she's drawn into an FBI investigation, one that she begins to realize might be less about justice for victims and more about persecution of whoever is standing in the way.



(Amazon)

'The Handmaid's Tale' By Margaret Atwood

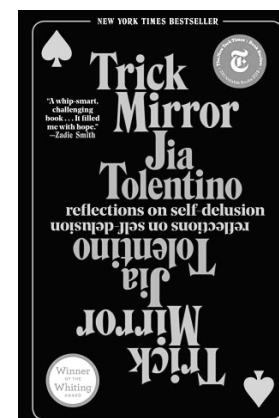
A dystopian classic, "The Handmaid's Tale" is timeless in its disturbing portrayal of an alternate America where women have become second-class citizens, their bodies commodified by the government. The story serves both as a "what if" and a warning of a future bred from complacency.



(Penguin Random House)

'Transcendent Kingdom' By Yaa Gyasi

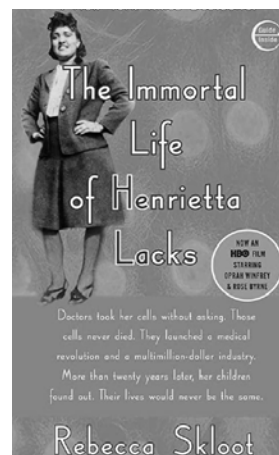
Yaa Gyasi's "Transcendent Kingdom" is the story of a Ghanaian-American family told by their daughter Gifty, a brilliant neuroscience PhD student, who is left to grapple with the death of her brother and the subsequent depression cast upon her devoutly religious mother. Stark and powerful in its portrayal of addiction and grief, Gyasi's writing is rhythmic and candid as it explores the intersecting identities tasked to one woman who strives to understand what they mean.



(Amazon)

'Trick Mirror' By Jia Tolentino

A collection of essays spanning topics from contemporary feminism, internet culture and Tolentino's own life, "Trick Mirror" is enlightening and powerful, yet personal and charming in its dissection of prevalent societal issues.



(Amazon)

'The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks' by Rebecca Skloot

You've probably heard of the polio vaccine, yet not the name Henrietta Lacks, a black female cancer patient. Without her cells the polio vaccine wouldn't have been possible, along with numerous other vaccinations and medical breakthroughs. However, Lacks died without knowing any of this, let alone giving her consent or receiving profits for the use of her cells. Rebecca Skloot's investigative report into the life of one of the most important yet unrecognized people in modern medicine is key towards the understanding of systemic racism in medicine that persists today

New movie highlights one of the most famous business deals in sports history

'Air' directed by Ben Affleck reveals the story behind Michael Jordan and Nike's partnership

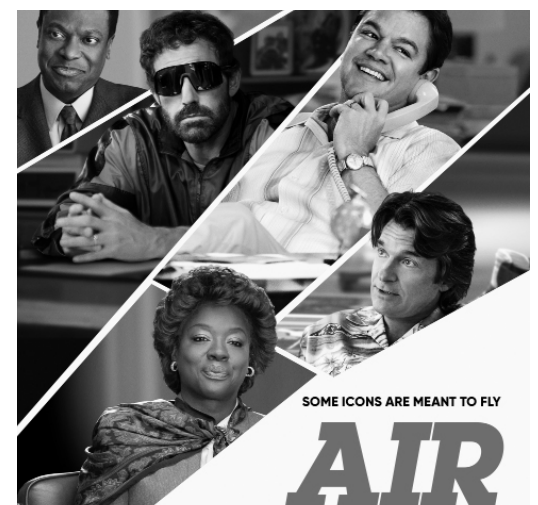
Jill Sousley Staff Reporter

Michael Jordan is one of the most decorated basketball players of all time, possessing six NBA championships and five MVP awards. Ben Affleck, an American actor and filmmaker, introduced the idea of a film highlighting Jordan's story and how the shoe became so relevant. Affleck wants to recreate Nike's mission to land Jordan and reveal the history between Nike and Jordan.

"Air" won't include Michael Jordan himself, but rather the people who encouraged his partnership with Nike. The Air Jordan shoe was created and it took over the shoe market. Air Jordans are some of the most popular shoes ever created and Nike profits around \$5 billion annually from sales.

Many major actors and actresses will be seen in this film including Matt Damon and Ben Affleck who is not only directing the film but also starring in it. Damon and Affleck have reportedly been friends for years, but this is the first film of Affleck's that Damon will be starring in. Their roles are vital to the film as they will be playing as Sonny Vaccaro (American executive) and Phil Knight (Nike Co-Founder) in the film.

The release date is set for April 5 and it is expected to be extremely popular. It will air exclusively in theaters once it premieres, and Amazon Prime Video will most likely be where it ends up after.



(IMDB)

'Daisy Jones and The Six' times I sobbed over this book

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter

It's 1979 and the hottest band in America has come to Chicago for the tour of their award winning and acclaimed album "Aurora", and puts on the show of a lifetime. The LAST show of their lifetime as a band.

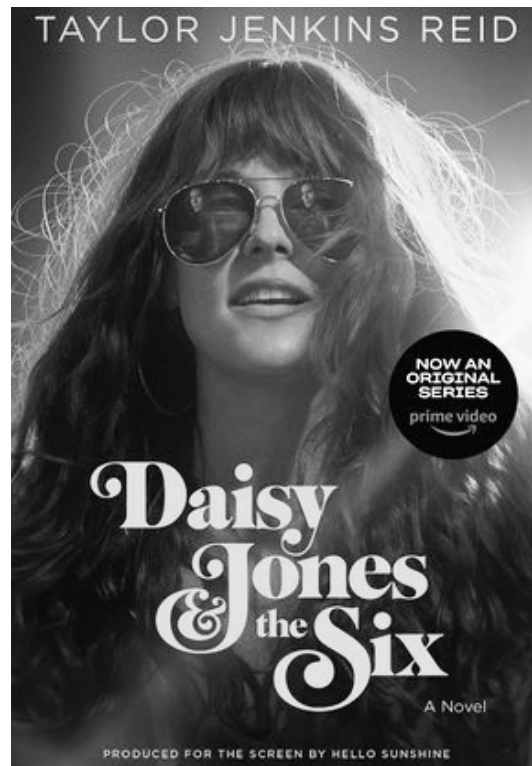
That is the premise of the New York Times Best Selling novel "Daisy Jones and The Six" by Taylor Jenkins Reid, a novel that has infected every part of the internet and created a fan base of monumental proportions.

A novel that has spurred the release of a highly anticipated show. A show that created the "Aurora" album from the books that is now playing everywhere.

Before there was a show or an album, there was just a singer named Daisy Jones and six scruffy band mates who just wanted to make it big. Daisy Jones is a young girl living and breathing the music scene in California, dreaming of singing the songs she pours so much of herself into.

Her ticket is The Six, a rock n' roll group composed of Billy, Graham, Karen, Peter, Warren and Eddie, all who have different stakes in this band. The main member is Billy Dunne, lead singer as well as raging narcissist and dreamer.

At first rocky, Billy and Daisy's relationship morphs into one of forbidden love and hate, over This novel is a masterpiece. Written in interviews



(Penguin Random House)

of the past, it is such an easy book to read and an incredible book to listen to via audiobook. All the music and memories, of moments that may lead to

the band's split on a fateful day in 1979.

characters feel raw and human, which has become rare in today's mainstream literary world.

This is true for Daisy and Karen especially, who leap off the page with their bursting personalities and witty quotes. Others, like Billy and Graham, are written to be so insufferable at some times but quite kind and loving on other pages that it's hard to keep a solid opinion on them.

The writing also paints a picture of the rock n' roll scene of the mid sixties and the late seventies, and with only a few episodes of the show released, it seems as though the adaption is capturing the vibe with almost perfect clarity.

However, there is just something stopping it from being the perfect adaptation. It's nothing concrete but it's an abstract feeling that the book crafts with such precision that the show just can't create. Even still, the show's writing perfectly depicts the characters.

In the case of the enigmatic Daisy Jones, she is written as both broken but hilarious and raw and loving, and it helps Riley Keough act as a perfect Daisy. From her appearance to her mannerisms, she just warms my heart.

While not all of the show is out, there are high hopes that it can perfect that incredible and sob-worthy ending. Though many fans can only hope.

'YOU' should have stopped after season three

Penelope Neireiter Staff Reporter

All the way back in 2018 a show called "YOU" dropped on Netflix and instantly became a major hit in the category of crime drama. The show's main character is named Joe Goldberg (Penn Badgley), who isn't one of your typical rom-com lover boys. Instead, like we saw in season one, two and three, he will find a girl, become obsessed with said girl, and then do whatever he possibly can to protect this person even if it means killing someone.

This show became such a hit because Joe would become obsessive over his love interests. He would do a deep dive into all their social media platforms and figure out every loose end there was to know about someone, before he even had a real conversation with them.

The reason this grabbed so many people's attention was because it provided a harsh reality check that any given person can dive into your social media pages and figure out so much of your personal life.

This show is very binge-worthy, but unfortunately this season the writers have decided to break the release into two parts, one month apart from each other. Part one and two both have five episodes. This split release process is used to elongate the suspense and anticipation of a show, but for me this season should not have been dragged out after a very anticlimactic part one.

After many love interests and crimes committed, season four started off with everyone's favorite murder/stalker Joe escaping his past life and moving to London, where he began what he calls a

"well-deserved" holiday.

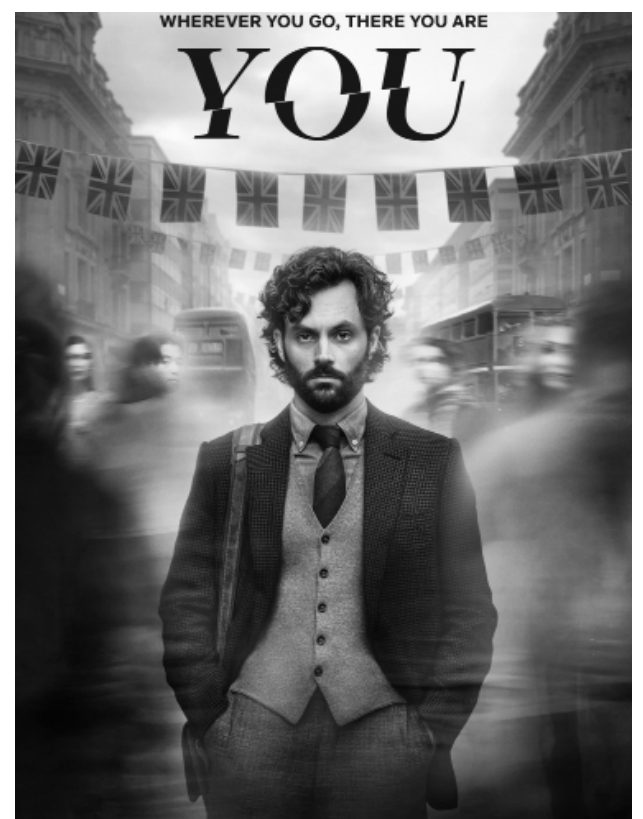
A show that has made an audience sympathize with a murder has once again changed the setting and characters. It is now set in the groggy city of London where Joe has the new name of Jonathan Moore and grown out hair accompanied by a long beard to disguise his identity.

For a long time, the creators of "YOU" avoided the whodunnit trope that we see copied and pasted in all forms of the mystery genre. This is what set the show apart from the rest. However, this season there has been a new murder that for once Joe did not commit, and has now left Joe and the audience to solve it.

This is where it started to go downhill for me. In the old seasons, it was blatantly clear that the person who committed the crime was Joe. That was the interesting part of the show: how as an audience we could root for the underdog, who was also a murderer. I tended to use the excuse that he was doing whatever he could for the people he loved, but truly I was just lying to myself.

Typically, when someone watches the mystery genre, there are guesses being fired out on who they think the killer is. I did this all throughout the start because all the new characters seemed eligible to be the murder. When I got to the end of episode five and there was a big reveal of who did it, I found myself repeating that I had guessed it all along.

Like how I root for Joe as the underdog to make it out free, I am now rooting for this show to break free of this bland storytelling and really bring it home in part two. After watching part one I feel like it was predictable and underwhelming, and I wish



(IMDB)

I was able to have watched both parts together so it would feel more conclusive and fulfilling. Nonetheless, part two comes out on March 9, where I will once again be anticipating this exciting tale. Who knows, maybe part one was just all the background information needed to set up something big in part two.

The death of mall culture and the future of ethical consumption

Maisy Clunies-Ross *Opinions Editor*

In my quest to find a dress for winter ball, I shopped for nine hours and visited 11 stores, and came back empty handed, with nothing but a couple dollars missing from my wallet and stomach ache from the overpriced cheese sauce of my Wetzel's Pretzels. I wasn't alone in my disappointment, it was palpable in the air. The mall was crowded, full of people rushing around without getting anywhere. No one looked satisfied. No one looked happy. We were all wilting, sagging to the side like the faux flowers in the store display cases.

We'd been there for hours, carefully sifting through dresses and ties, but to no avail. Everything looked cheap, tacky jewels on plasticky dresses, only to reveal the garments in question were upwards of \$80. I might be cheap, I honestly lost sight of what a reasonable price is, but I don't think anyone should pay that much for something that's falling apart on the rack. The size range was limited, everything was either an XL or built to fit a 13-year-old. The racks were ransacked and disorganized. The styles available all appeared to be from proms or bat mitzvahs from 2018. Eventually, I gave up. I went home. I sat down on my computer, pressed a few buttons, and ordered the dress I'd been eyeing from the beginning.

My experience is just a microcosm of a larger trend, a shift away from in person retail to online shopping. This shift has led to the closure of many malls over the past few years. According to Business Insider, there are now only 700 malls in the U.S., in comparison to the 2,500 in the 1980s. It has also led to increased popularity of online brands, like Shein, Emmiol and ASOS. Although some of these brands have opened in person stores, they are



(Maisy Clunies-Ross)

primarily known for their online presence, their wide selection, and ease of ordering.

For a while, online shopping was revered as the dawn of a new, better era of consumption. They were convenient; one could order anywhere from on a train to in their bathtub. They were accessible; finally the variety of styles and brands that had previously been exclusive to big cities were available to anyone. They were affordable; people could find dupes for expensive pieces that fit their price range. Unfortunately, the accessibility of products and ease of purchase offered by online retailers quickly led to overconsumption.

Companies promised clothes: fast, cheap and in large quantities. Consumers began to expect this speed and volume of products, so brands delivered. They use sweatshops and poorly made materials to keep costs low. They had drivers work long, straining hours to deliver products quickly. The products in question are poorly constructed with thin material. They fall apart after a few wears, but few people notice or mind. A new trend will appear on social media, and they will buy a new wardrobe, their recently bought yet already frayed clothing forgotten in a closet. It's a vicious cycle and a deeply unethical form of consumption.

Don't get me wrong, malls weren't vastly more ethical. Forever 21 still had sweatshop-made, disposable fashion that was only made to last a couple wears and a single season, but there's still something about the decline of in person retail that is concerning. It provided the opportunity to try things on, feel how cheap the material is in their hands, try something on and decide not buy it. Whereas when ordering online, most people end being dissatisfied and returning it, for it to end up in a landfill where most returned clothing goes, or being too lazy to return at all, so it ends up sitting under your bed reminding you of a time when you thought a fuzzy bedazzled sweater vest was going to change your life.

At the end of the day, the real problem isn't malls versus online shopping, Forever 21 versus Shein. It's the disregard for human life present in both the mindsets of the manufacturers and consumers. Consumption is no longer an act born from necessity, it is a pastime. Clothes aren't

bought because they're high quality or necessary or even going to be worn, they're just bought for the sake of buying. While online shopping may have exacerbated this attitude of overconsumption, the root of the issue is buried much deeper and thoughtful spending is nearly a distant impossibility.

I don't wish for my previous statement nor the tone of the article to be that of hopelessness, but instead, an impassioned call to action. For so long, people, myself included, have shrugged our shoulders when faced with the complexity of ethics in modern life. We've told ourselves and each other, "There's no ethical consumption under capitalism." It's a seemingly liberal statement with a deceptively nefarious subtext: if nothing is ethical, why try at all? Why not consume, mindlessly and hedonistically, emboldened only by our desires to look hot and distract ourselves from the myriad of challenges in our lives?

Maybe because consumption doesn't have to be thoughtless and shopping doesn't have to be a guilt inducing or inherently unethical pursuit. Shopping can be a fun distraction and beloved pastime without money being wasted, garment workers being endangered and millions of clothes ending up in landfills. For instance, thrifting is a great alternative to the endless hours of fun once provided by malls. While the quality of the products is less consistent or reliable, the hunt for a nice outfit in a sea of jeggings and aggressively bedazzled graphic tees can be just as entertaining. To replace the ease and distraction of a mindless online shopping scroll, online consignment stores provide a variety of affordable second hand options that are only a click away. Most simply, you can continue to visit the same in person and online retailers, just think more carefully before making a decision. Ask yourself, 'Do I really need this?', 'Will I wear this in a few months?', and 'Why am I buying this?'. None of these are perfect replacements or foolproof solutions, they all have their own problems, and the fight for a more sustainable and ethical consumption in a capitalist system will continue to be an uphill battle. Yet, in a time where so many feel hopeless and shopping feels like a welcome escape, a few people purchasing a little more consciously can still be a step in the right direction.

Winter Ball: from the venue to the outfits, it was a night to remember

Alina Zahn *Staff Reporter*

Ticket sales began for Winter Ball on Jan. 19, and the Activity Center was filled with eager students from all grades excited to attend. Most of the students, besides the 2023 senior class, hadn't been able to have the Winter Ball experience yet, which made this event even more captivating. The excitement of Winter Ball spread throughout the school so much so that BHS's devoted ASB team had to order 100 more tickets in order to meet the needs of all the students that wanted to have their night at the museum. On Feb. 10 at 8 p.m., the Seattle Art Museum's (SAM) doors opened. At first the line was around the block of the museum but very quickly everyone filled in.

Walking through the doors of the museum you were greeted by some of the favorite school volunteers. There was also a separate line where you had the luxury of checking in your coat instead

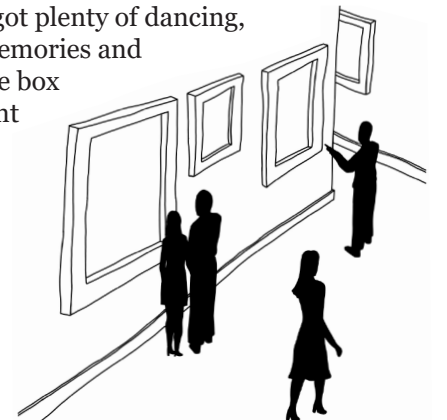
of throwing it into a pile like there was at Ballard's Homecoming this past October.

Ascending the stairs, a vibrant dance floor with flashing lights was the center entertainment of the night. With a large dance floor and tall windows allowing the room to feel dark but bright at the same time, it was incredible. For me though, the areas I gravitated to most were the art exhibits.

As you made your way up the escalator you were faced with endless rooms of eye-catching art. From the Asian exhibits to modern contemporary pieces, the SAM had it all for students. The ongoing rooms therefore led to great photo opportunities. Students from all grades took advantage of the art galleries and were able to capture the fun of the night through photos in the exhibits.

From strolling through the art exhibits to dancing the night away on the dance floor, our Winter Ball

was inviting to everyone. It was inclusive towards everyone's needs and created a night that every student will have amazing memories from. At 11 p.m. the doors closed, but not before every student got plenty of dancing, created new memories and got to check the box off an important high school experience. The 2023 Winter Ball was the best.



(Daphne Knox)

Budget cuts cause concern for the future of language programs

Evan Sadler Staff Reporter

As a new student to Ballard High School, glaring comparisons have become apparent when I look at the World Language Department. Like most schools in America, Spanish dominates the scene, but Ballard lacks any sort of varied language courses, outside of asynchronous classwork, with the only in-person language classes being Spanish, French or Japanese.

The majority of students tend to lean towards the class they took in middle school: Spanish. Due to the popularity of Spanish, the smaller French program may suffer budget cuts that have the potential to hurt the integrity of French as a language course. French teacher Annaick Sturgeon may be asked to cut down to one period of French I, depending on freshmen registration. A period of AP Spanish 5 will be cut as well. While this sounds like a fair deal, the cuts will be detrimental to the French program, but almost dismissable to Spanish.

French is only offered by Sturgeon and language teacher Mark Quinn, with a combined six periods

total, five by Sturgeon and one by Quinn.

“Both French I periods for this year are full of freshmen, and the reason that they spoke about cutting next year’s French I is due to the lack of enrollment within the class, which is not possible to predict without a confirmed number of incoming freshmen,” Sturgeon said.

To cut a class targeted towards incoming freshmen, like French I, without a confirmed amount of said incoming freshmen would be rash to say the least, but would also be detrimental to the integrity of French students’ academics. Freshmen would take French I, but if the class is only offered within one period, a butterfly effect would occur in the rest and reduce how many people actually continue French for the rest of high school.

In order to maintain integrity within the French program at Ballard, Sturgeon has written a proposal to reform the budget cut to her classes, and hopefully keep the already small French program’s coherence, which was presented to the

administration at 4 p.m. on March 7. The budget committee is now waiting on freshmen numbers to choose which of the introductory language classes to cut.



Sturgeon writes her proposal for the budget cuts with the support of AP French and French 4 students. (Evan Sadler)

Risk vs. reward: you can’t fake your safety in the backcountry

Marley Helfer Copy Editor

Whether you’re thrilled when the mountains get snow or despise the cold, many are familiar with the phrase “risk vs. reward.” Sports like football, rugby and hockey are all notorious for being dangerous. However, the risks of being in the backcountry are often set behind the rewards of fresh turns and new snow.

Firstly, what is the backcountry? There are

actually several kinds of backcountry in the mountains, but broadly the term is defined as the out-of-bounds and unpatrolled areas of the mountains. Sidecountry, more specifically, refers to the areas just outside of a ski boundary. Nearly six million of the 23 million skiers and snowboarders in the world venture into these areas.

I have been skiing since I can remember, and a few years ago I began venturing into the backcountry. I can’t tell you how many times I have seen people come flying into an unsafe area above me, risking the safety of everyone nearby – including myself. Especially when at any moment you could get caught in an avalanche sliding close to 90 mph, your actions have actual consequences when you’re in the backcountry.

I have had to accept the risks of heading out of bounds, but the human-added risks are something that I – and I know other experienced snow athletes – find aggravating. For me, my frustration stems from the already privileged atmosphere surrounding skiing and snowboarding. It is already such a luxury to be able to descend thousands of feet of mountain in just minutes, and the fact that people are not willing to do the right things when going in search of more snow and untracked turns is absurd.

However, there are a few reasons as to why people act so recklessly in the backcountry and sidecountry: accessibility, reliance on technology and a false sense of safety. Because the sidecountry is right next to the resort, it is more common for people to travel into these areas than the true backcountry. When in the sidecountry, many have the misconception that this means you are safe because you aren’t that far from the resort. This in turn can cause people to be caught off guard and make bad decisions.

“[The sidecountry is] the safest kind of backcountry skiing, but it’s also the most likely to yield problems because it’s so easily accessible to people,” science teacher Noam Gundle said.

What would happen if you got caught in an avalanche, got injured or got separated from your group? If you’re going into the wilderness without

alertness and with a false sense of safety, you’re taking a big risk.

“There’s a lot of risk that you’re encountering in the backcountry,” Gundle said. “Some of it is caused by you, and some of it is caused by things you can’t anticipate, like other people out there skiing.”

This unsafe behavior is also rooted in a misconception many have; just because you have the right tools and technology doesn’t mean you are safe.

You might be familiar with an avalanche beacon, a probe, an avalanche shovel or an avalanche airbag. All of these tools are certainly necessary to have with you. With that said, these tools are for the moments after you – or your friend, or even some other group of people who were out there too – gets caught in a bad situation.

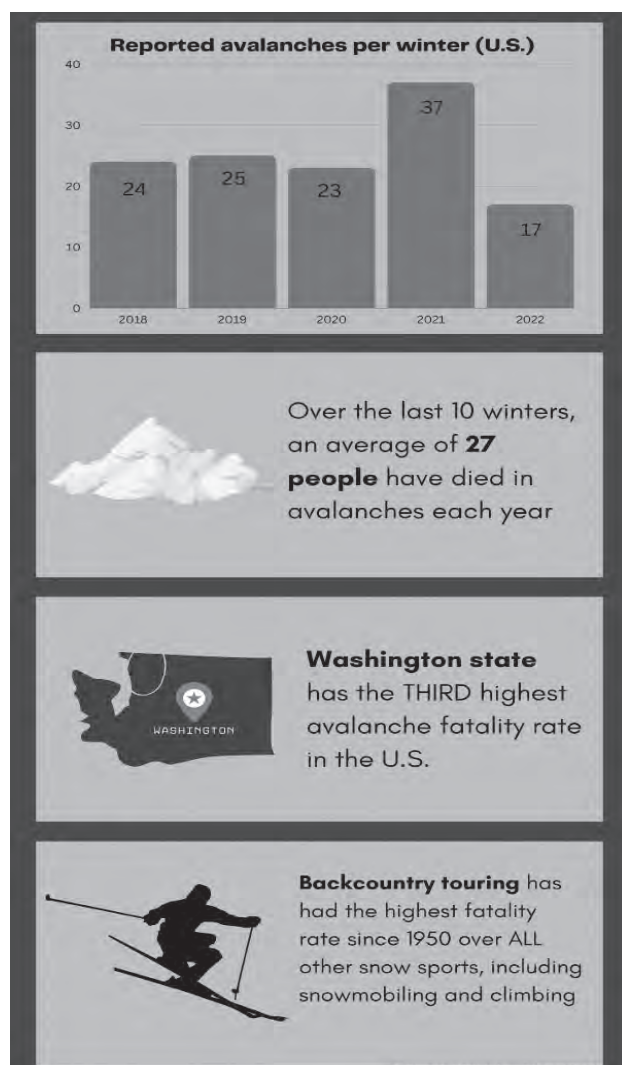
“Do I want to use [an avalanche beacon]?” Gundle said. “Do I want to have to dig up my friends or have my friends dig me up? Heck no.”

Being in the backcountry with these tools doesn’t mean you’re free from danger, but instead it often gives people the feeling that they can take more risks. Instead of relying on tools, people should be relying on their knowledge. Your brain and education surrounding backcountry safety are the best tools you can bring.

Bringing the right gear with you doesn’t do anything if you don’t know how to use it, read the mountain, assess the snow conditions and use your intuition to make good decisions. Taking courses, going with a group, knowing your plan and the area, using your gear and understanding the mechanics of the mountain are all vital for being safe in the backcountry.

“The best advice is knowing the area... going in a group and making sure you have all the right supplies,” senior Kate Lauderback said.

With the added risks of the increasing popularity of off-resort skiing and snowboarding, there are many risks that need to be accounted for when heading out into the wilderness. The rewards of being in the beautiful mountains of the Pacific Northwest don’t come until you’ve earned it.



(Marley Helfer)

15th Ave: vital to students but a horrific place to spend time

Alexa Terry A&E Editor

The experience is nothing new for students, waiting for the bus while preparing yourself for the already painful experience of riding the D-line and being forced to stand on the small concrete island on 15th Ave NW, arms, elbows and chests pushing from every angle, precariously hanging off the edge of the narrow curb, face to face with cars going well over the 25 MPH speed limit.

Though the interior of Ballard is focused on ensuring student safety and wellbeing, the street that makes up the school's western border is a poorly designed death trap, spanning Petco to the Ballard Bridge and beyond. Though urban design may be a side thought for many of us, it has very real repercussions on the lives of anyone who lives, walks and drives in city borders, especially for those that must interact with poor design such as that found on 15th.

The street provides a uniquely horrific experience for pedestrians, anyone who has attempted to have a conversation with someone else while walking down the sidewalk is all too familiar with these flaws. The sidewalks are far too narrow for multiple people, and a small, pitiful parking strip is the only barrier between cars and people. This means blaring noise is an ever-present feature of walking along the road.

The parking strip is a lame excuse for a division, with a few sparse trees strewn about, along with some brown grass to make it feel natural. Even with these additions, the road feels hostile to anyone who is choosing to be there without a motorized vehicle. When walking to the attractions on 15th I do everything in my power to avoid walking on 15th directly, instead choosing to opt for a side street and awkwardly cutting across when I've reached my destination, doing this ensures that I won't be

walking in fear of a car driving off the road and hitting me for longer than absolutely necessary.

Aside from the narrow sidewalk and parking strip, the four traffic lanes and a turn alley do nothing to minimize speeding and reckless driving. Few people drive in a manner that maintains the safety of other drivers along with that of pedestrians.

The street not only feels unsafe, it is unsafe, there are numerous stories of fatal car crashes that have happened on 15th along with countless others that have caused injury. A fatality has occurred as recently as November of 2022.

The many side streets that turn onto 15th are largely at fault for the abundance of casualties, with most avenues to get a car onto the street either being an unprotected turn into busy traffic, or an awkward merge that requires impressive levels of telepathy with the cars around you.

The zoning laws behind the design of 15th imply that the space should be pedestrian friendly with the city classifying it as Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2). The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections writes that these spaces should be "Moderately-sized pedestrian-oriented shopping areas that provide a range of goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods." When looking at the businesses that remain on 15th, this description is unrecognizable.

Half the storefronts lining the streets are auto shops, a byproduct of the car dependent infrastructure of the area, and the other half are fast food chains (think Taco Bell, Wendy's, Five Guys, etc.) Occasionally we see small businesses pop up, but they constantly close and reopen under a different name due to being inaccessible to people in cars and they have become rare among the sea of

corporate drive through services.

These features make the street unpleasant to spend time on, no one says "Hey lets go hangout and walk down 15th this weekend!" The thought is nauseating.

Though I am not a fan of what 15th has become, I am optimistic about its potential. I can see it turning into an Aurora adjacent hellscape, but it could also move in the direction of something like Market Street, with more stop signs and crosswalks, functional public transit and smaller, more inviting storefronts.

Our city has become overrun with streets resembling car oriented suburban shopping streets, but the charm of Seattle still remains throughout the city. Ballard has a rich history as a nordic fishing port, and parts of that history are still visible in the neighborhood's design, with the locks, and the sect of the neighborhood surrounding them resembling a pedestrian friendly space which is a destination for students, tourists and local residents alike.

Unfortunately, the neighborhood's original charm has been stripped from 15th, making our school's location loud and inconvenient at best and dangerous at worst.

I am not an expert on urban planning, I have never taken a class on it, and I have zero experience with creating zoning laws and designing streets. However I have lived in a city for 18 years, and I can confidently say that certain designs evoke feelings of joy and others evoke feelings of dread. Walking out of school at the end of a long day should not be a reminder of how our street prioritizes the efficiency of cars over our safety and wellbeing.



Valentine's Day: why you're worth a box of chocolates

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter

What am I worth? What are any of us worth? There's really no day like Valentine's Day to cement your worth, a day where one's worth is material. What if you get a bouquet of flowers? Roses? Daisies? Weeds? Are you worth just a card? Handwritten? Custom? Embossed? What about jewelry? A watch? Some earrings? Maybe even a ring?

What if you get nothing? If you are worth nothing in material value, then what is the point? The point of this day? The point of seeing happier and more attractive people who are not lonely?

That is why I hate Valentine's Day, the day where I feel so small and unloved in a country that prizes material goods over emotions. The day where I see so many happy people and I am confused that I don't mirror their emotions.

It's the day where everyone funnels their love into money and gifts and favors. Where \$20 is worth more than "I love you."

We were born and raised to work and be faithful consumers, to be a cog in a machine until we've rusted. So it makes sense that a day for love is in reality a day of goods to trade and barter for affection.

This all forms transactional relationships, which

are just investments disguised as relationships. All people in relationships give each other things in order for a good return. Therein lies the twisted nature of present day Valentine's Day, a day where these types of relationships are celebrated and normalized.

I'm not saying giving gifts to one another is a mark of a toxic relationship, but if these material items are more important than emotional feelings, then it may morph into something more problematic.

As well as the normalization of transactional relationships, this day also breeds toxic positivity. A day like your birthday where if you're not happy, then what's wrong with you? Whether you're single, dating, or "it's complicated," you have to enjoy this day. Toxic positivity is something that has become mainstream thanks to social media, where you always have to be positive. You have to be perfect and happy every minute of the day and what better day to be at your happiest than Valentine's Day, because love (I guess).

So the real question is, how do we reclaim Valentine's Day? I personally don't want to reclaim it. I personally am fine with hating it and there is certainly a chance I'll change my tune if

I'm ever in a healthy, positive relationship. But for now, I'm fine and dandy with basking in my hate for this day.

But, I want everyone to know that your worth doesn't have to be defined by everyone else. If you want to be worth a diamond ring, you are worth it! A box of chocolates? Sure, why not. You can be worth anything because in the end nothing matters, least of all
Valentine's Day.



(Daphne Knox)

BEAVESDROPPING

WANT IT TO BE FUNNIER? SUMBIT TO @BALLARDTALISMAN ON INSTAGRAM

“You ate a bug?? For a dollar??”

“I know the entire Yung Gravy discography but I can’t remember my mom’s birthday”

“He’s kinda hot but I think I look a little bit related to him”

“There are three differences between me and Jesus: He had a beard, he wore a robe, and he loved you”



Satire: Yearning for urinal division

Lucas Salm-Rojo Guest Contributor

From a young age every man learns the International Code of Urinal Etiquette. It has a range of offenses such as talking to the person next to you, pulling your pants all the way down to your ankles, and standing there for an awkward amount of time before you start to relieve yourself. But the worst offense of all, the cardinal sin of the urinal, is to look at the apparatus of the person beside you.

To avoid the committal of this cardinal sin, most men observe the principles of urinal spacing, leaving at least one extra urinal between you and your nearest urinal-mate. It’s also a comfort thing.

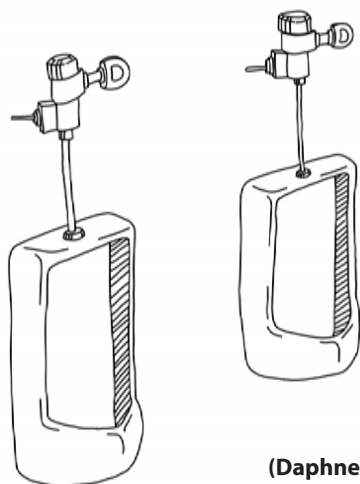
“Using a urinal next to someone makes me want to vomit because of how uncomfortable I am. It deters me from using the bathroom at school,” junior Lachlan Ransiear said.

By observing the spacing principles of the International Code of Urinal Etiquette, mental duress can be avoided, however several of the urinals in a urinal block must go unused. This lowers the amount of urinals available to the weiner-wielding population of our school.

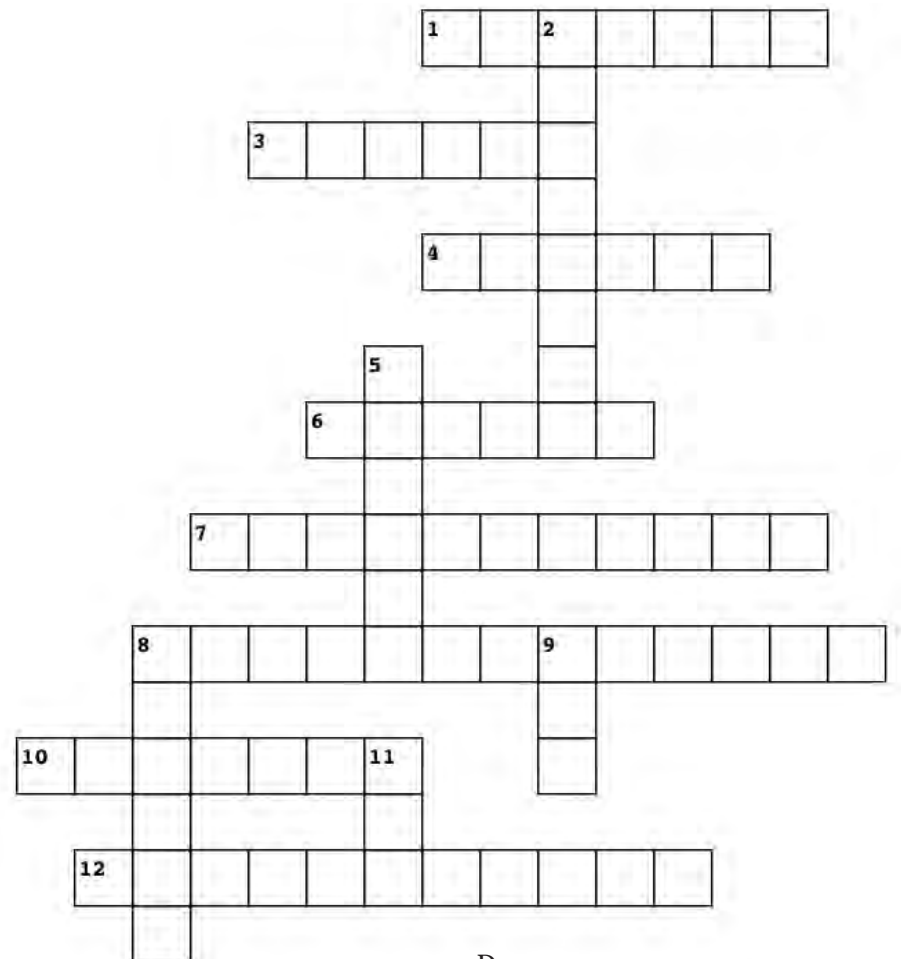
ASB set out to address this issue last year when they announced to the student senate that over the course of the year they would be working with our custodial staff

to install urinal dividers in the bathrooms. However, over a year later, only two of our many urinal-equipped bathrooms are able to address the separation of streams. We were promised the safety of our scrotums, and we have yet to be satisfied.

While BHS faces an appalling amount of issues, the division of urinals, although comedic, should not be excluded from the list. We don’t want you seeing our package, and we don’t want to see yours either. It is obvious that in order to keep our sticks secretive, the installation of urinal dividers in all of the bathrooms used by male-identifying students must be finished. Why our wishes have yet to be fulfilled may be left up to speculation, but I sure hope it isn’t because anyone is sneaking a peek.



(Daphne Knox)



Across

1. Day as long as night
3. Just the beginning of a plant
4. _____ history month
6. Cause of frequent sneezing
7. May 5th
8. Showers the quad at UW
10. April _____ brings May flowers!
12. Bird that has something to say

Down

2. Extreme disc sport
5. Football (across the pond)
8. First purple bloom
9. Players x-ing
11. Best source of vitamin D

(Crossword courtesy of Izzy Kim)