

Student News Magazine of St. Andrew's Episcopal School

SA REVELATION FALL 2021



VOLUME 10, EDITION 1



MEET THE STAFF



BAILEY BRYAN

design editor



EMMA STOKIC

news decoder student
ambassador



STANLEY QU

broadcast editor



**STELLA
BREWER**

social media
editor



CHRIS SHIEPIS

staff writer



**CONNOR
DUNNIGAN**

staff writer



**CAROLINE
SNEDEKER**

staff writer



**ANTHONY
JONES**

staff writer



MANAV SINGH

staff writer



**AMIRAH
SINGH**

staff writer



DEV PATEL

staff writer

Table of Contents

03 **"#BAMARUSH
TIK-TOK"**
Emma Stokic

09 **"MISSISSIPPI
SETS THE
STAGE"**
Caroline Snedeker

14 **"EMMA'S
CRITTERS"**
Manav Singh

18 **"AN IMPROVED
LUNCH ROOM"**
Dev Patel

21 **"JACKSON'S
WATER WOES"**
Connor Dunnigan

26 **"A GIFT FROM
ST. ANDREW'S"**
Dev Patel

27 **"THE PRICE OF
A PANDEMIC"**
Chris Shiepis

05 **"THE ROADS TO
DOMINANCE"**
Stanley Qu

11 **"SEX ED IS A
STUDENT RIGHT"**
Bailey Bryan

15 **"THE DRESS
DILEMMEA"**
Amirah Singh

19 **"FEAR
OR
FREEDOM"**
Stella Brewer

23 **"A CARDINAL
SIN "**
Anthony Jones

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Revelation is a student-run publication that is produced by the SA journalism class and is published three times throughout the year. The goal of The Revelation is to convey ideas, thoughts, and news from the staff to its readers, primarily SA students, but is not a reflection of the entire staff or school. As a student-run publication, The Revelation strives to produce a publication with the hope of making as few errors as possible. The Revelation accepts editorial pieces in the form of letters to the editors or guest editorials, but if the content of those pieces does not fulfill the guidelines or is inappropriate, the staff reserves the right not to publish the article.

#BAMARUSH: MORE THAN A TIKTOK TREND

DOES IT UNCOVER BUILT-IN RACISM AND CLASSISM?

● senior copy editor emma stokie

You're scrolling through your TikTok "for you page" (aka, FYP) on a hot mid-August day. Suddenly, you notice that every other video you watch has #BamaRush in its caption. The next morning, #BamaRush hit the national news.

SO, WHAT EVEN IS #BAMARUSH?

#BamaRush is more than just another social media trend; it sucked people in—both young and old—into the reality show world of the lives and outfits of college freshmen who were trying to join sororities at the University of Alabama. Students led viewers through a behind-the-scenes process of the sorority rush week. Girls gave rundowns of the brands of their clothes for each day of the week-long rush process, a concept that became wildly popular as "OOTD," shortened from outfit of the day.

These seemingly lighthearted videos stepped into another dimension once viewers began to dig into the deeper implications of sorority life, bringing up the idea that all of the negative "isms" of society are brought to light in sororities especially classism and racism.

BACK TO THE BASICS: WHAT DOES SORORITY RUSH REALLY MEAN?

Sorority rush refers to the process in which sororities recruit undergraduate university students to their sisterhood. Each day has its own theme and meaning. For example, on day one, all the girls get to know each of the houses through virtual videos and rank their favorites.

Freshman Katie White recently went through the rush process at The University of Alabama. Many

see benefits to joining a sorority.

"Alabama is a very large school," White said, "and being in a sorority is not only a good way to meet people but to also get involved on campus and give back to the community."

As part of its national survey of more than 10,000 U.S. college graduates conducted between Jan. 15 and Jan. 29, 2021, Gallup interviewed more than 3,000 alumni of diverse backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses who graduated college within the past 15 years and are members of fraternities or sororities. Eighty-four percent of affiliated alumni say if they had to do it all over again, they would still join their fraternity or sorority.

But, this year was much different from the past. University of Alabama Freshman and recently inducted sorority member Samantha Smith recognizes the impact of widespread media coverage from large news services like the New York Times.

"Alabama already has the biggest Panhellenic association in the nation and "Bama TikTok" made it even bigger. Going through rush it did feel like the whole world was watching, so it was a surreal experience."

WHAT DO THE TIKTOKS REVEAL ABOUT SORORITY VALUES?

This wave of TikToks, predominantly posted by white, upper-class Freshmen, amplified sororities' problems with racism. About 35,000 students are enrolled at the University of Alabama. Only 12 percent of all students are African American, and 25 percent of the student body are members of fraternities and sororities.

High School Senior Taylor Grigsby is considering joining a sorority as a black student looking to her future college life.

"I feel like sororities put a lot of emphasis on

money and physical looks,” Grigsby said. “There is so much more depth to a person than only that. The sisterhoods are typically hyperfocused on these superficial aspects, which is why I will not rush.”

Sororities at the University of Alabama were desegregated in 2013 - not even a decade ago. According to data released by UA in January 2018, 92 Black or African-American students (3.9 percent of the 2,338 students total) were members of Alabama Panhellenic Association sororities, up from 10 in 2013.

“GOING THROUGH RUSH FELT LIKE THE WHOLE WORLD WAS WATCHING, SO IT WAS A SURREAL EXPERIENCE.”

“I believe white sororities are based on racism.” High School Senior Zoe Hariston said. “Even if it isn’t intentional, aspects like networking and legacies reveal hidden systematic racism.”

What started as true southern accents and examples of the best jewelry to wear to rush transformed into a mockery of the freshmen hoping to join a sorority. People of all ages began to

A TREND FROM A TREND:

MOCKING THE ORIGINAL VIDEOS

make fun of their mispronunciations of words like “philanthropy” and “OOTDs” (Outfit of the Day) that round up to a thousand dollars.

The overflow of BamaRush media coverage certainly stirred controversy about the intentions of sororities, but current members recognize the benefits of sororities, apart from the social media clash.

“Honestly, rush is a time for you to be selfish,” White said. “Do what you want and feel is best for you and no matter how hard it may be, don’t let the people around you pressure you or influence your decision. Ultimately this is about you and where you will be able to give the most and benefit the most from.”

Under every joke lies a truth; the mockery is fun, but the reality is disheartening.

“The BamaRush TikToks were certainly entertaining to me,” Smith said. “The girls who posted them did have consequences such as not getting picked by the ‘big’ sororities. Once these TikToks gained substantial attention, they became an issue of liability. Many of the large sororities did not want these girls because if they ever messed up on the internet, it would reflect negatively on the sorority.”



PHOTOS BY ALABAMA PANHELLENIC

THE ROADS TO DOMINANCE

● staff writer stanley qu

China's President Xi has taken the Chinese Communist Party to new heights with the help of the Belt and Road Initiative—a Chinese effort to spread communist ideas and to boost China's geopolitical standing.





I am a Chinese American. In simple terms: I am genetically Chinese, but my values, sense of style, and taste are all American. I support America in all international competitions, but have grown up in a household that maintains its cultural roots. As an American, China's growth and dominance is frightening. It is impressive to see how fast President Xi is moving China towards his vision.

The Belt and Road Initiative is an ambitious global infrastructure development plan by the Chinese Communist Party. It was started in 2013 as a global initiative affecting countries from East Asia all the way to Europe and Africa.

Sometimes referred to as the New Silk Road, the Belt and Road Initiative is similar in ways to the original Silk Road. The Silk Road was a complicated trade route that stretched from China to Europe

The Silk Road started in the 2nd century BC during the Han Dynasty and ended in the 14th century when the Ottoman Empire took control of China. The Silk Road was a trade route that connected China to the rest of the world to keep China at the center of most economic trade. The Silk Road not only spread goods such as silk, tea, and rice, but also cultural ideas such as Buddhism and Christianity. President Xi Jinping has similar plans for the Belt and Road Initiative.

On the People's Republic of China's State Council website, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) asserts that the Belt and Road Initiative is "a bid to enhance regional connectivity and embrace a brighter future together." The CCP has made several infrastructural investments in Asia, Africa, and Europe including countries such as Libya, Mongolia, Turkey, Ethiopia, among others. These infrastructural investments include roads, bridges, and railroads in 139 countries.

However, the Belt and Road Initiative is not just a way for China to invest in smaller countries; it is also a way to increase its geopolitical standings similar to how the US increased its standing with the Marshall Plan after World War II. There is evidence to suggest that Beijing has been utilizing

a tactic known as "debt trapping" to trap these countries into binding and difficult-to-escape deals. Debt trapping is a technique that lenders can use to lure unfaithful borrowers into unfair repayment methods. In the case of debt trappings, developing countries could borrow money and resources from China to build roads and bridges, but in the case that they are unable to pay back China, then they may have to give up assets such as natural resources or military service or free trade.

Many believe China trapped Sri Lanka into this type of debt when they financed the building of the port Hambantota, a project with little chance of realizing economic success, and with Sri Lanka's giving of the port to China for the next 99 years, the theory seems to be supported. Believers in this theory include Vice President Mike Pence and Attorney General William Barr. However, an article written in the Atlantic called "The Chinese Debt Trap Is A Myth" by Deborah Brautigam and Meg Rithmire claims that there was no debt trapping and the Chinese bank that funded the project set up a manageable repayment plan. Many Chinese onlookers seem to disagree with the theories that Vice President Mike Pence and Attorney General William Barr claim including Zack Zhu, a Chinese



GRAPHIC BY REUTERS

exchange student in Ridgeland, Mississippi.

“The Belt and Road Initiative is really helpful for smaller countries that need help,” Zhu said, “and I think that it is helping the global economy and is making China more powerful on the geopolitical level.”

The Atlantic also provides evidence that the main cause of Sri Lanka’s struggles to repay China was the Sri Lankan nation rebuilding movement following the end of a decades long war. According to the Atlantic, China Eximbank loaned Sri Lanka “\$307 million, 15-year commercial loan with a four-year grace period, offering Sri Lanka a choice between a 6.3 percent fixed interest rate or one that would rise or fall depending on LIBOR, a floating rate.” The Atlantic states that this deal was manageable and could be fulfilled. Simply stated, Sri Lanka struggled to repay their debt because of the massive government spending caused by the nation’s initiative to rebuild—not because they borrowed too much.

“THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE IS REALLY HELPFUL FOR SMALLER COUNTRIES THAT NEED HELP”

The idea of the Belt and Road Initiative is comparable to that of the Marshall Plan enacted by the United States—a \$13 billion investment for Western Europe following the conclusion of World War II. \$13 billion in 1948 is equivalent to about \$145 billion in 2021. The US sought to revitalize European industry and prevent the spread of communism through the Marshall Plan. Different from the Belt and Road Initiative, countries assisted by the Marshall Plan did not have to pay America back for assistance. This act strengthened America’s claim to being “the global protectors.”

The Belt and Road Initiative is an extremely large project that only a few countries could succeed in. It requires respect from other countries and even more resources to fund the project. The massive growth in China’s GDP has allowed China to invest in such a large project growing almost 73% since 2012. The Belt and Road Initiative is a modern day Chinese Marshall Plan. It not only is assisting in the reconstruction of smaller countries, but is also a boost geopolitically for the Chinese Communist Party.

PHOTO BY CHINESE GOVERNMENT



MISSISSIPPI SETS THE STAGE FOR THE FUTURE OF ABORTION

● staff writer caroline snedeker

The Mississippi abortion case pending before the U.S. Supreme Court brings to light the decades of attacks on Roe V. Wade pursued by Mississippi entities. These attacks have attempted to counter the legal status of abortion in Mississippi and, inconsequently, the nation.

Abortion is legal in Mississippi. The ability to access an abortion in Mississippi, however, is restricted by a number of attempted and tried laws over several decades. In March 2018, Mississippi legislators passed House Bill 1510, the Gestational Age Act, which outlawed abortion after 15 weeks except in a medical emergency or in the case of a severe fetal abnormality. The Gestational Age Act does not allow exemptions in cases of rape or incest.

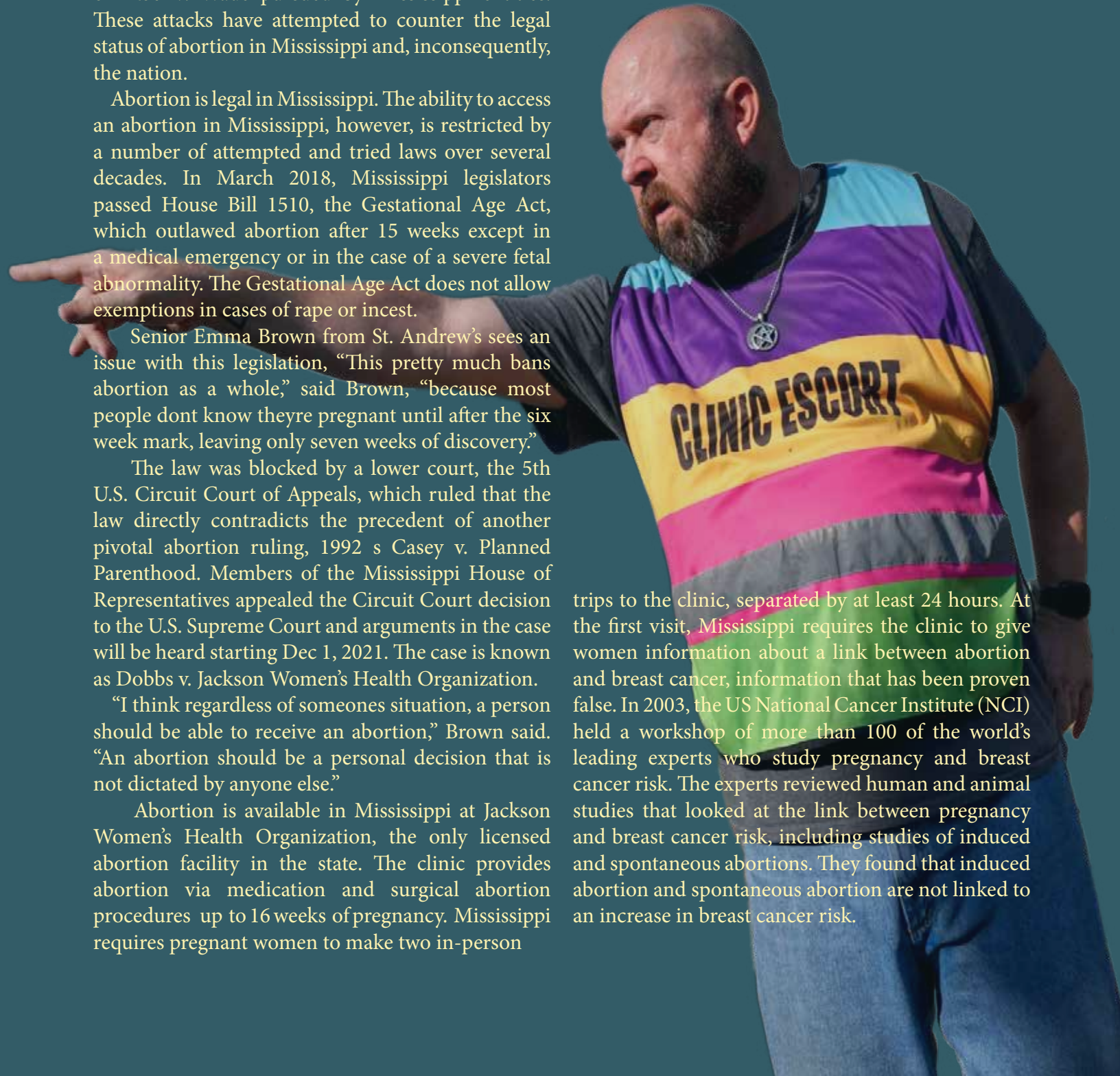
Senior Emma Brown from St. Andrew's sees an issue with this legislation, "This pretty much bans abortion as a whole," said Brown, "because most people don't know they're pregnant until after the six week mark, leaving only seven weeks of discovery."

The law was blocked by a lower court, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled that the law directly contradicts the precedent of another pivotal abortion ruling, 1992's Casey v. Planned Parenthood. Members of the Mississippi House of Representatives appealed the Circuit Court decision to the U.S. Supreme Court and arguments in the case will be heard starting Dec 1, 2021. The case is known as Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization.

"I think regardless of someone's situation, a person should be able to receive an abortion," Brown said. "An abortion should be a personal decision that is not dictated by anyone else."

Abortion is available in Mississippi at Jackson Women's Health Organization, the only licensed abortion facility in the state. The clinic provides abortion via medication and surgical abortion procedures up to 16 weeks of pregnancy. Mississippi requires pregnant women to make two in-person

trips to the clinic, separated by at least 24 hours. At the first visit, Mississippi requires the clinic to give women information about a link between abortion and breast cancer, information that has been proven false. In 2003, the US National Cancer Institute (NCI) held a workshop of more than 100 of the world's leading experts who study pregnancy and breast cancer risk. The experts reviewed human and animal studies that looked at the link between pregnancy and breast cancer risk, including studies of induced and spontaneous abortions. They found that induced abortion and spontaneous abortion are not linked to an increase in breast cancer risk.





The second visit, during which a woman can obtain an abortion through medication or an abortion procedure, must be at least 24 hours later. Mississippi prohibits public funding for abortion for women eligible for state medical assistance for general health care unless the procedure is necessary to preserve the woman's life, the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, or when there is a fetal malformation incompatible with live birth.

This two appointment system burdens individuals who may encounter logistical challenges and costs related to child care, taking time off work, and travel.

"There only being one abortion clinic in Mississippi already impedes someones ability to get an abortion," Brown said, "if you live in the Delta it is already a struggle to travel down to Jackson, not including factors like whether someone has a car or not."

Such costs may act as barriers to care for those with low incomes, a group that experiences particularly high unintended pregnancy rates. In Mississippi, 19.6 percent of all residents live in poverty, according to the United States Census Bureau. This makes it the stricken state, correlating to the high unintended

pregnancy rate. Diana Greene Foster, a professor and demographer who uses quantitative models and analyses to evaluate the effectiveness of family planning policies, followed 1,000 women who were seeking an abortion. She found that about half of people who get an abortion live below the federal poverty level, and the majority of the women who took part in the research, known as the Turnaway Study, were low wage at the start. According to the study, the group of women who were denied care fell deeper below the federal poverty line, taking four years to catch up to the levels of employment of the women who received an abortion. About 72 percent of the women who did not receive an abortion ended up living in poverty, compared with 55 percent of those who did. The two appointment system at the singular abortion in Mississippi already obstructs the ability to receive an abortion, the outlaw on abortions after 15 weeks will add to this difficulty.

An anonymous female SA student weighed in on another side of the issue, "I think you should have to prove you are not financially stable in order to

"MISSISSIPPI IS ALREADY IN SHAMBLES, THIS CASE IS JUST GOING TO TEAR US FARTHER APART."

receive an abortion," said this student, "and the two appointment system may ensure that."

Mississippi has been referred to as ground zero for the abortion debate, with years of historical discourse over the issue. The Mississippi abortion Supreme Court case will decide whether the only abortion clinic in the state will close or not, a trigger law that influences a pervious ruling. In this case, Roe V. Wade.

Brown believes that, "Mississippi is already in shambles, this case is just going to tear us farther apart". She credits this case as a factor of division to a state that is already facing an abundance of other issues.



DOBBS V. JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

SEX ED IS A STUDENT RIGHT

● design editor bailey bryan

When citizens of the United States think of the issues that prohibit the ability to live safely everyday, they often concentrate on big media headlines, overlooking smaller, but perhaps more important, issues of education. The small state of Mississippi, in the southeastern region of the United States, is plagued with an overabundance of STD transmission and teen pregnancies. In 2019, over 8,000 cases of Chlamydia and 3,000 cases of Gonorrhea were reported in teens between ages 15 and 19. These numbers were double the rates of neighboring states Arkansas and Alabama. The origin of these problems in Mississippi may be the outdated, and inefficient teaching of sex education in Mississippi schools.

Mississippi House bill 999 originally passed in 2011 regulating the implementation of sex education states that “the local school board of every public school district shall adopt a policy to implement abstinence-only or abstinence-plus education into its curriculum.”

Despite the mandating of a sex education program, the writing of the law has left loop holes and flaws that have jarring effects when implemented into school districts. Despite offering students the ability to become educated on the physical and mental effects of sex, the law places student participation in the programs in the hands of the parents.

As stated in the amended Section 37-13-173, Mississippi Code of 1972, “Each school providing instruction or any other presentation on human sexuality in the classroom, assembly or other official setting shall be required to provide no less than one (1) week’s written notice thereof to the parents of children in such programs of instruction. The written notice must inform the parents of their right to request the . . . exclusion of their child for such instruction or presentation.”

By removing student ability to sign up in the program themselves, teenagers are put at the mercy of their parents to participate in such programs. All over the United States, citizens have protested clauses in states such as California and Florida which award parents the same right.

“I went to a mix of public and private institutions, and during my public school education I had the option for a sex ed class,” Junior Adam Farr said. “But my parents opted me out.”

By removing the opportunity for students to have a right in their access to sex education, students are placed in danger of parental prejudice restricting their right to learn.



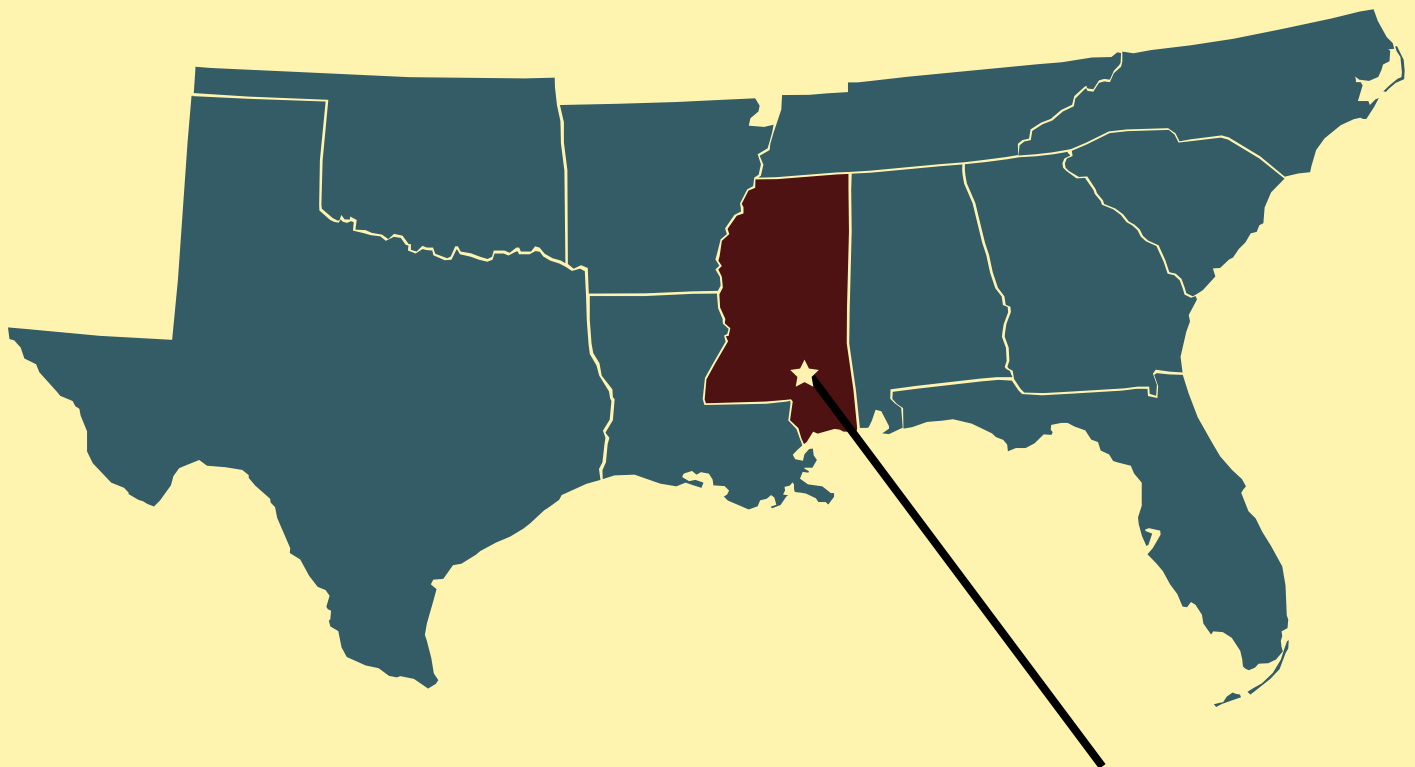
Despite this, teenagers will have sex even without knowing the possible effects that come with involving oneself in sexual activity.

In addition to the highest rate of sexually transmitted infections in the South, a study conducted by the Public Library of Science in 2011 found that Mississippi also has the second highest rate of teen pregnancies as a result of abstinence-only education, which does not prepare students for sexual interactions. Per 1,000 teen girls in Mississippi, 30 will become pregnant, and of those girls only 11 will graduate high school. In Mississippi, only 38% of women who have a child as a teenager will earn a diploma compared to an overwhelming 87.5% who would graduate high school unencumbered by a child. By neglecting necessary in-class information on contraceptives and how to safely have sex, Mississippi teens do not receive an education that prepares them for the future they will likely

“AS AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL, WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLEMENT STUDENT LED SEX EDUCATION, WE CAN PUT THINGS IN OUR CURRICULUM THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAN’T”

experience.

The lack of student access to dictate their sex education highlights the topic of student rights. Student rights can exist as a complicated and multilayered subject depending on where a student



Mississippi ranks 1st amongst teen STI contraction rates and 2nd among Teen Birth Rate

38% OF TEEN GIRLS WHO HAVE A CHILD BEFORE 18 GET A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

attends school. In a public institution, students are protected by their right to equal protection under the 14th amendment, but are limited in their ability to voice opinions in their school curriculum and education.

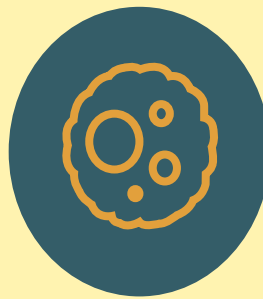
When students attempt to gain access to the education they deserve, the school can argue that classwork is being disrupted and the students in question can be removed from the premises.

In a Supreme Court hearing in 1968, *Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, the court ruled that students had the right to be removed from the classroom if their speech was disruptive.

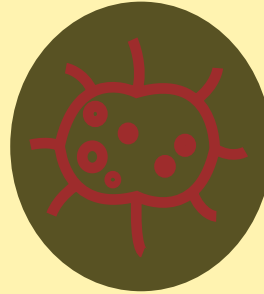
“[If] conduct by the student, in class or out of it, which for any reason — whether it stems from time, place, or type of behavior — materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others is, of course, not immunized by the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech.”

The openness to interpretation left by the clause of “disrupt[ing] classwork” leads to students’ ability to argue for a change in their education to be made null and void by most public school boards.

Through research conducted in recent years, it has become clear how much more beneficial education has become when controlled by students in the classroom.



WITH 740 CASES PER 100,00 PEOPLE, MISSISSIPPI HAS THE 3RD HIGHEST CHLAMYDIA INFECTION RATE IN THE COUNTRY



GONORRHEA INFECTION RATE HAS GONE UP 30% SINCE 2015, PRODUCING 326 CASES PER 100,000, THE MOST IN THE COUNTRY.



MISSISSIPPI RANKS 3RD IN THE NATION IN TEEN PREGNANCIES, BUT 2ND IN TEEN BIRTH RATE ONLY TO ARKANSAS

“As an independent school, we have an opportunity to implement student led sex education,” Junior Jasper Jones said. “We can put things in our curriculum that public schools can’t and have students send in questions and help decide material.”

In instances where students were able to dictate learning, such as Pittsfield High School, students were able to develop stronger critical thinking skills and interactions with one another in the classroom.

By applying this same reasoning to sex education in Mississippi, if students were included in the curricular decisions of school, including the teaching of sexual education, issues such as sexual infection transmission and rate of teen pregnancy could drop to a lower rate than present given the increases in learning at high schools which possess student incorporated curriculum. It is viable that more students would gain a diploma and graduate college with a degree by being receiving a better education protecting them from the difficulties of parenthood. In order to combat the issues prevalent in the education system today, the Mississippi Government must let students work with curriculum providers to create an efficient program for teaching education in the South.

EMMA'S CRITTERS

● staff writer manav singh

Ceramics is traditionally the art of making pots and vases from hardened clay. However, SA Senior Emma Brown recently had the idea of making tiny critters in her ceramics classroom. Brown experimented with cats, ghosts, pumpkins, No-Face from the movie Spirited Away and many other characters. Brown had a specific purpose in her design choices and when asked why she chose to make critters, Brown responded with “I just

wanted to do something fun and creative,” said Brown, “something that made me happy, and it brought joy to me seeing all these fun little things come to life.” Afterwards, Ceramics Teacher Claire Whitehurst said “Emma took this on herself. I have been teaching slab building, handbuilding and wheel throwing but she just wanted to make them and started asking ‘can I do this?’ and I said yep!”



DRESS DILEMMA



PHOTO BY: AMIRAH SINGH

Should schools put an end to restricting students from expressing themselves? School is a place to learn, not a place to be criticized about how a student is dressed. Uniforms and dress codes at schools restrict teenagers' abilities to express themselves. Students are figuring out who they want to be by expressing themselves through different clothing and hairstyles.

The Dress Code Committee met during the 2016-17 school year to make reforms to the dress code for St. Andrew's students. According to Reverend Annie Elliott, Chaplain and Member of the Upper School Dress Code Committee at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Ridgeland, Mississippi, she helped change the inherently discriminatory dress code into a gender neutral dress code.

"As a group," said Elliott, "we considered whether the dress code should continue to have gendered rules."

The previous uniform restricted girls from playing on the playground due to the nature of the required clothing. For example, girls could only wear skirts with no other options to wear. The committee decided to make the dress code gender-neutral by allowing girls to wear pants and skirts. The members of the Dress Code Committee wanted all of

St. Andrew's students to feel comfortable in their attire at school, regardless of their gender. Elliott has thought about the issue of self-expression and the dress code.

"The dress code does limit some self-expression, to be sure," said Elliott, "but it does not prohibit expression. Though I have heard complaints about the dress code, I haven't heard this specific complaint from any current Upper School students."

Some students were interviewed on St. Andrew's High School campus about how they felt about the dress code. St. Andrew's Sophomore Tina Garg thinks that the St. Andrew's dress code is better than other schools but she still thinks it is not perfect. "The dress code system is still sexist," said Garg, "since it affects certain girls more than others." But she does think the St. Andrew's dress code is better than most places. SA Sophomore Raegan Mabry agrees. "I feel like no one really dress codes anyone," said Mabry, "so I don't really mind it, but it can be limiting to what I want to wear."

The St. Andrew's dress code for the high school is very lenient. Since students are not required to wear uniforms, they can dress in their own style, however, there are some restrictions. The restrictions would be not to wear inappropriate clothes to school,



such as clothes that might offend someone or a group of people. According to the student handbook, “Religious headwear is allowed in all locations. Non-religious headwear is allowed outside. St. Andrew’s hats, hats without words, and college/university hats may be worn.” St. Andrew’s dress code does not restrict colored hair on their campus.

Madison-Ridgeland Academy is an independent school in Ridgeland, Mississippi. MRA’s students wear uniforms to school instead of self-chosen clothing. The female uniforms consist of skirts, stockings, and blouses. The male uniform consists of collared shirts and pants. The school’s dress code is modest as it reflects Christian values, but there are some concepts about MRA’s dress code that stand out. The MRA student handbook states “Hairstyles/hair-colorings that are extreme or designed in an unusual manner, in the opinion of the Administration, to distract or draw attention will not be permitted, including but not limited to ponytails, twists, Mohawks, cornrows, and dreadlocks.” This rule does not take into account racial and ethnic differences. For example twists, cornrows, and dreadlocks are considered distracting even though they are in the roots of African American culture. The dress code could prohibit African American students from embracing their culture. Growing a beard and having long hair for males is also prohibited in the handbook. In some religions like Sikhism, males do not cut their hair or their facial hair so they would not be able to express their religion at MRA. Their dress code could be considered discriminatory against other races, genders, and religions.

Jackson Preparatory School is another independent school in Jackson, Mississippi. Jackson Preparatory School’s dress code allows female students to wear skirts and pants. According to the school’s handbook,

however, it said “There will be no distracting body art, hairstyles, or hair color.” Sarah Scruggs, the Assistant Head of the Senior High at Prep thinks that the rules prevent distractions in the classroom.

“We do have students here who have had colored hair,” said Scruggs, “and that is a call that we in the administration have to make. We just don’t want anybody to draw attention to their head so that it

“HAVING A GENDER-NEUTRAL DRESS CODE IS ONE WAY THEY CAN HONOR THE DIGNITY OF ALL OF THEIR STUDENTS.”

becomes a distraction in class. That is really not something that we really have a hard time enforcing. We have African American students that do wear afros. We don’t have a problem with that. As long as the hair has not become the main focus of the classroom.”

Even though this school requires students to wear uniforms, they don’t stop students from wearing their traditional hair, which helps students connect with their cultural roots.

Having a dress code that is not inherently discriminatory plays a great role in students’ lives who are all from different backgrounds. If schools let students dress the way they want to, under some restrictions, they will gain more confidence while attending school. This will give students a chance to express themselves or feel comfortable in their own

skin at school.

However, after the changes that the Dress Code Committee made, Elliott noticed a change in her students' personalities after the dress code updates. They started wearing clothes that followed the trends of fashion and embraced their cultural roots. The Dress Code Committee of St. Andrew's believes having a gender-neutral dress code is one way they can honor the dignity of all of their students.



SHOULD STUDENTS HAVE UNIFORMS?

30% OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS HAVE A UNIFORM REQUIREMENT

58% OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS HAVE A UNIFORM REQUIREMENT

85% OF EDUCATORS ARGUE UNIFORMS REDUCE DISCIPLINE ISSUES

54% OF STUDENTS SAY UNIFORMS DON'T COMPROMISE THEIR IDENTITY

90% OF STUDENTS SAY THEY DON'T LIKE WEARING UNIFORMS TO SCHOOL

Credit for survey: creditdonkey.com

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN IMPROVED LUNCH

● STAFF WRITER DEV PATEL

St. Andrew's now has a new and improved Cafeteria. Located in the Commons St. Andrew's now offers more of a variety of different choices for lunch, and now is better at giving what the students want. The entire cafeteria was changed with the addition of having carpets which completely changes the entire feeling of being in the commons. St. Andrew's now has a sandwich maker which has received a mass amount of attention. When asked What is different about the food from the cafeteria, and how has that affected you, SA Junior Jameson Mcmillian responded with "now there's more of a variety to choose from, and also the food tastes way better than it did before. I am glad that St. Andrew's changed their cafeteria up."



fear or freedom

THE UNTOLD STORY OF ASSAULT IN HIGH SCHOOL SETTINGS.

Everyday when a child goes to school, they should be benefiting from a safe environment that will result in their wellbeing, but in schools in America, students as young as 5 years old are subject to the intimidation of harassment and assault. There is a dangerous power dynamic between the teachers and the students that can easily result in the harassment of students. According to RAINN, the assault and intimidation of those in power positions who are supposed to be taking care of them has resulted in the loss of education, leading as far as self destructive behaviors and escalating suicide rates among children and teens later in their lives. Students who should be benefiting from the education system are becoming victims of it instead.

According to AbuseLawsuit, schools are neglecting to report cases, and when schools aren't reporting internal abuse, students are being traumatized as well as, not receiving the justice they deserve. Cheer coach Lee Marshall at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Ridgeland, Mississippi, has had his own experience with a former student being assaulted and keeping it a secret for several years.

"One of the girls I coached had been assaulted by someone of higher power," Marshall said. "She had kept it a secret for so long, and the only reason I knew about it was because she had started a blog many years after the fact."

Title IX is a federal civil rights law issued in

● social media editor stella brewer

the United States that was passed as a part of the Education Amendments of 1972, and it prohibits any sex-based discrimination in schools or other educational programs that receive federal funding. Title IX holds that all students are given access to equal education opportunities, and requires that all schools to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence. So, Title IX is currently being used in court cases to address the issue of sexual assault. Title IX does not require that independent schools have a policy in place that would hold schools accountable for Title IX's statutes.

According to the official document, "Title IX does not cover single sex elementary, secondary, (other than vocational schools), or private undergraduate schools."

Although many schools do hold themselves to the standards of the federal law, independent schools are not required to abide by all parts of the Title IX statute. All schools in Mississippi follow the mandated reporter law, which is a law of the state of Mississippi that holds that if anyone who works with students sees anything that could be considered abuse, they are required to report it. At St. Andrew's, student safety is a high priority. Upper school counselor Lauren Powell has explained that students are top priority when on St. Andrew's grounds.

"At St. Andrew's, every teacher is required to



have training for recognizing any sort of abuse Powell said. “They must renew their training every three years in order to stay employed here.”

According to RAINN, Students who have been part of an abusive high school student/teacher relationship live with the effects of it for the greater part of their lives. Harassment and assault can have long lasting psychological and physical effects for years after the incident. Harassment contributes to a hostile and unsafe environment at an institution. According to the American Association of University Women, students lose the capacity to learn in schools where they have been harassed. Additionally, Schools do not make it easy for students to come forward, and a majority of schools are failing to properly report incidents of violence. The lack of reporting negatively affects schools as well as their students.

According to the latest available statistics from SSOCS data, 71% of schools reported at least one incident of a violent crime during the 2017-2018 school year (this includes both sexual assault and other violent crimes). The number does seem to be decreasing, but by what cause are the numbers decreasing? Are schools neglecting to report cases, or are they working towards creating a safer environment for their students? St. Andrew’s head

of diversity and inclusion, Sarah Spann, realizes that there is a large issue with the priority of sexual assault cases in highschool settings.

“I feel that there are big issues, but it stays under wraps. If a sexual assault is reported, is it faced

**“THERE ARE
ISSUES, BUT THEY
STAY UNDER
WRAPS”**

head on, or does it take a long process to look into every report?”

Changing the culture and spreading the message that sexual violence will not be tolerated is one of the most important things to do in order to keep children safe. It is everyone’s job to make sure that children feel safe in school! Sexual crimes in high school begin with a sense of entitlement and a craving for power and domination.

“It’s so so important,” Marshall says, “for administrators to create a safe space for their students so they can open up to someone

Speak up!

The
Education Department found that
reports of sexual violence at schools rose from
about 9,600 in the 2015-2016 school year to nearly
15,000 in the 2017-2018 school year

That’s
an increase of over 50
percent!

IF YOU OR SOMEONE WHO YOU KNOW HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED, CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE 24/7 THROUGH THE NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE AT 800-656-HOPE.



JACKSON'S WATER WOES

● staff writer connor dunnigan

In 2014, the media drew attention to the lead crisis in the water of Flint, Michigan, a city that is struggling just as much as Jackson, Mississippi. Jackson is known for sweet southern accents and fried chicken, but the lead concentration in the city's water system is a hidden danger.

St. Andrew's Episcopal School Junior Hadley Simms is concerned with the state of Jackson's water.

"I have been dealing with lead in water for about 10 years now," said Simms.

Simms says the city needs to take more of a stand to address the situation.

"My house has elevated levels of lead even for Jackson," Simms said. "So we cannot drink out of any faucets, which has led to purchasing water filters to be able to consume the water."

Lead in water is nothing to take lightly. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, lead concentration in water can lower the IQ of children, cause hearing problems, and cause premature birth. Lead concentration also often produces higher blood pressure and worsening

kidney function in adults.

Jackson has been dealing with infrastructure issues for years now, and according to the Brookings Institute, Jackson's water crisis is tied to its inability to proactively invest in infrastructure upgrades.

Recently the topic of lead concentration in water came up with Greg Buyan, the Director of South Campus Facilities and Operations for St. Andrew's Episcopal School. Buyan described the double-edged sword that the South campus faces. "The city of Jackson is trying to treat the water so it is drinkable and safe," said Bryan, they have made the water so harsh that it starts to attack the older pipes in the city of Jackson."

The school uses the technique called reverse osmosis which according to PureTec is the process where you demineralize or deionize water by pushing it under pressure through a semi-permeable reverse osmosis membrane and being able to combat this issue by filtering the undrinkable water through many different steps.

Why is Jackson struggling so much more than other cities?

The issue is the local government's failure of leadership towards the problem.

“MY HOUSE HAS ELEVATED LEVELS OF LEAD EVEN FOR JACKSON. WE CAN NOT DRINK OUT OF ANY FAUCETS”

Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba has expressed that the issue of lead concentration in water is a major problem for the city of Jackson and will cost millions of dollars to fix. This price tag is hefty, but the Biden Administration is attempting to create an infrastructure plan to support Jackson and other similar cities. Via WLBT news.

The city is trying to address the issue. Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba has addressed the problem of lead concentration in water and has expressed that it is a major problem for the city. In the past couple months, Jacksonians have begun to receive good news.

“I will give you the same words as the EPA director that was here and drinking the water: it is safe to drink,” Lumumba said, according to local news affiliate WLBT.

In spring 2021, Jackson reported 96 main water breaks and leaks. Only 53 have been repaired.

In that same time, more than 50% of the city's schools were closed because of the water crisis.



A CARDINAL SIN:

HOW OUR ACTIONS AFFECT BIODIVERSITY

● staff writer anthony jones

Imagine preparing for your senior prank, a time-honored tradition for students about to leave their high school and move on to college. The class of '21 at St. Andrew's Episcopal School had that in mind and so they planned their prototypical prank, the result of which felt like a miniature tornado had run through the school. This prank consisted of plastic forks in the ground, toilet paper rolls in the trees, party poppers, and other little inconvenient antics around campus. Alumnus Sofia Rodríguez, a senior at the time, said that the plan for the prank was to "wreak havoc."

"We were throwing around ideas," said Rodríguez, "but they would all cost too much money... It was cheap, easy, and seemed fun. Then we did the prank, went crazy, and went home. We wrote things in shaving cream and chalk outside and got into the library and moved furniture, threw streamers and toilet paper everywhere, and threw balloons everywhere. After the prank, we all showed up to school the next day, excited to see our masterpiece." Though when they arrived at school the next day, the library which was the most trashed of all was completely clean. Along with their discovery of the library, the initial reactions of the faculty varied, consisting of disappointment, disgust, and anger about the utter chaos and destruction that occurred on campus. One of those faculty members was Upper School Science Department Head Marks McWhorter, who was one of the first to arrive on campus that day and impacted the deepest by the seniors' prank.

When McWhorter arrived on campus early the next morning, he couldn't believe his eyes. McWhorter, an environmentalist/ecologist who has documented all the flora and fauna native to the St. Andrew's campus, knew that many local bird and plant species would be negatively affected. Even though many students were well equipped with the understanding of the effects of non-biological materials on animal populations. What they didn't grasp at the time was that not all hazardous material is easily removed, thus, these local bird species were not able to clearly distinguish what they would typically eat in the wild from the

synthetic material that was also present. McWhorter was disappointed that the lessons taught in his classroom weren't engraved in his students' memory and that their "meaningless" senior prank had such a massive biological impact on the environment. "It was certainly a sad moment but I think for me it was more sad knowing of the direct harm," said McWhorter, "because I think some students might not realize how actions can have consequences. It's the same thing about how you might leave your window open in your house and not realize that you're wasting energy by having your air go out, or on something as small as a little piece of plastic might end up having a cascading effect that could end up being pretty detrimental."

In the following days after the senior prank, McWhorter was informed by Upper School Fine Arts Department Head Emmi Sprayberry that some fledglings had fallen from their nest, and when he arrived upon the scene he saw that the newborn cardinals had ingested some colorful object. "It's not something that is necessarily the nicest or easiest to describe because you have exploding plastic coming out of baby birds' necks," said Sprayberry, "because they couldn't breathe or eat."

Upon closer inspection, McWhorter realized that the mother bird was feeding her fledglings pieces of plastic filament from the party poppers, and as a result, the fledglings were starving to death. The mother cardinal then cast her young from the nest. This observation was a stark reminder that the slight foreign addition to an environment can have unintended consequences for animal species. McWhorter sees this as a cautionary tale for students. "I think that it's always recognizing that actions have consequences," said McWhorter, "whether that's something as simple as littering, and not realizing where that plastic might go. A lot of people have seen pictures of the plastic-wrapped around birds' necks and turtles' legs but we don't think about it because we never see it in our own backyard, and that was, unfortunately, an example of what we can see literally right by our locker areas."

**“I THINK THAT
IT’S ALWAYS
RECOGNIZING THAT
ACTIONS HAVE
CONSEQUENCES,”**

the 2020 Living Planet Report, published by the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Futures Centre has reported that in the past 50 years the Earth has lost 68% of monitored animal species. The global goal would be to keep extinctions of known species to below 20 per year for the next 100 years — a single headline number to represent biodiversity. In April and May of 2022, the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity will be meeting in person in Kunming, China, discussing a new action plan, the Global Biodiversity Framework. This plan is committed to slowing the overall rate of biodiversity loss present in certain areas. The latest iteration of the Global Biodiversity Framework plan published in July 2020 by Science, states that the plan will try to conserve 30% of the world’s land and sea regions and provide financial support to low-income countries to combat earlier targets of biodiversity loss.

With so much attention being given to how humans are affecting the environment, you would think that current SA students would be more aware. However, just this semester, two SA seniors decided to try and “have a good laugh.” “This prank was planned out a lot more than people may think,” said one of the seniors, “We knew what was going to happen every step of the way.” One problem that they couldn’t account for was other human interaction. The prank consisted of putting a car filled with styrofoam peanuts in the middle of the upper school area. All doors were locked prior to their departure so that no styrofoam peanuts could escape the car. When they arrived on campus the following morning, they were not aware that someone had opened one of the doors of the car, allowing the styrofoam peanuts to spill out into the courtyard, thus inadvertently causing an environmental impact on the campus.

When discussing pranks in general along with

I n

their impacts with Upper School Head of School Blake Ware, the census with administrators was that if there was going to be a prank of any sort, there needs to be prior approval. The administration is not prohibiting seniors to do a prank, but in the words of Ware, “Whenever we start getting into things that are long-term or permanent damage, we have kind of entered a different threshold. That I think is going to make it really hard for us to kind of allow anything.” The reason for this is not just in terms of maintaining the cleanliness of the campus, but also for the individuals that are affected by these pranks. For the first prank that occurred, the maintenance crew were the ones that had to go back over and clean up after the initial cleaning led by the students. Which, from their perspective is not fair, knowing that the mess that occurred came from something pre-approved by the administration. In response, Ware said “We had members of our facilities team ready to quit their jobs that day. They were just so fed up with this stuff...it could have been a tipping point for some of them because they thought that they were going to have to be the ones who cleaned that up too.” This, in part, came from a simple miscommunication between administration and facilities staff. In his closing remarks about pranks, Ware says “I’m going to try to have a good sense of humor, I can be a fun-loving guy, but we also have to make sure that we’re not breaking ourselves, and that we’re not negatively affecting the continuity of learning whenever possible.”

When interviewing the seniors for why they did the prank, they said “We just wanted to have a good laugh. When my dad was in school at St Andrew’s, they filled the principal’s office to the roof with newspaper, released wild pigs, and put a car in the quad at the old school. I thought since there hasn’t been a prank in a while, why not do it? My partner came to me with the idea and we just ran with it.” In both cases of senior pranks, the individuals involved were aware of the potential consequences that could occur, but at the moment didn’t care or had planned it to where nothing could occur. Rodriguez, thinking months after the prank happened said, “Personally, I did feel bad about the prank. The reactions we got from teachers we loved made it all come into perspective. We hurt and disrespected the faculty and the campus, and we wouldn’t be able to take it back.”

This year's senior pranker expressed his opinion as well, saying "The biggest lesson I think my partner and I learned was people will always see things differently than you do. While most people saw it as funny and harmless, there will always be those people that try to make it something it's not."

St. Andrew's Episcopal School has taken measures to become more environmentally friendly with an open campus plan that promotes interaction between students and the environment, which the Science department uses to impact the curriculum. "I would say that the single biggest thing an individual can do is to be aware of their own actions" said McWhorter. "People think recycling is the first thing but that really is our third step. The first thing we need to all be doing is reducing our own specific carbon footprint. If you have a chance to carpool with somebody, carpool. That's less gas being used. There's a lot of little things that an individual can do. But we're going to have to have a larger discussion as a society if we're going to collectively make change. Unfortunately, we are at the point now where single actions of an individual are not going to stop the crisis that is occurring."

Reflecting on the effects of climate change can be a difficult topic, and is subconsciously on the minds of many individuals. The question of "What is our responsibility to not just the planet, but also for ourselves and future generations?" lingers like the effects of climate change. That is why the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow, Scotland will address the harsh truth and realities that climate change presents before us. Which unites many countries to fight against the one problem that affects them all. In the words of Blake Ware, the beauties of the Earth are "Almost like a fleeting opportunity... And consequently, our future generations are as well."





A GIFT FROM ST. ANDREW'S

● STAFF WRITER DEV PATEL

Every year St. Andrew's has something new and exciting for their students who are returning from summer break. This year St. Andrew's gifted their students a brand-new ping pong table. Located in the Courtyard, students have spent much of their time playing ping pong. The student body enjoyed the ping-pong table so much that they created a ping-pong club, holding ping-pong tournaments and enjoying playing ping-pong on a daily basis. When asked about how the new ping-pong table affected student life,

SA student Zack Zhu responded with "During the process of playing ping-pong I also get to know a lot of new people and a new friend, and it is really helpful for me." With great gratitude for St. Andrew's for providing a new chance for students to enjoy their time at school. With the same question asked to SA Junior Samuel Chen stated, "playing ping-pong is something I look forward to everyday and is something that I am very thankful for the school to give this to their students."

THE PRICE OF A PANDEMIC

staff writer christopher shiepis

Although few claimed to have foreseen the fall of Afghanistan to Taliban forces until it happened on August 15, 2021. Afghanistan was already on a steady decline, one that many experts predicted would have dire consequences.

In early 2020, Afghanistan was predicted by organizations like the WHO to be negatively affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. According to the World Bank, Countries facing poverty, like Afghanistan, were likely to face challenges as they began to combat COVID-



PHOTO BY: RAHMAT GUL

19. This is because poverty affects two major components of stopping the virus: mask wearing and social distancing, as people can't afford masks and don't have another option but to live in households or areas that are overcrowded. Before the start of the COVID pandemic in 2019, 34% of Afghanistan's population lived below the national poverty line according to the Asian Development Bank. The already dire situation was made even worse by the pandemic, as the percentage rose to 47%

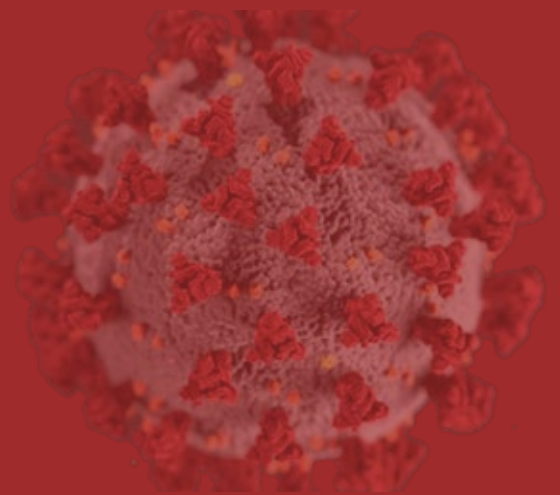
in 2020.

With a population of 30 million, Afghanistan experienced about 1,000 new cases a day during its peak according to Our World Data. However, a survey by Afghanistan's Health Ministry revealed that around 10 million citizens have actually been infected with COVID. This discrepancy in the data can be explained by the lack of access to testing. Additionally, Afghanistan's economy was hit hard by the pandemic, as the World Bank predicted that the Afghan economy would contract between 5.5% and 7.4%. This situation would significantly decrease the amount of revenue the country and government could pull in, which in turn would make poverty rise even more.

“THE SYSTEM IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE THAT RUN IT”

Major General Walter Givhan experienced the poverty in Afghanistan first hand while in the country, as he was in charge of rebuilding the Afghan Air Force and rebuilding Afghanistan's infrastructure.

“I saw the need for infrastructure projects... even the basics [like] a sewage system” said Givhan.



The lack of access to hospitals and the inability for the government to reach remote regions is also why the Afghans struggled, as they didn't have the proper roads, sanitary systems, and other infrastructure projects needed to deal with a severe pandemic like COVID.



PHOTO BY: CHRISTOPHE CERISIER

"There are places you can't get to," said Givhan, "Unless you're using air."

This poses a challenge when a country's Air Force is diminished. In addition, the CIA estimates that 50% of Afghanistan's roads are unpaved. The lack of infrastructure along with the recent 4.6 percent drop of Afghanistan's currency have spelled pure disaster for the country (Business Standard). With all the information gathered, it's safe to say the country as a whole has also experienced growing violence and government instability due to terror attacks from groups such as ISIS -K and other radical groups. Afghanistan's challenges, exacerbated by the COVID pandemic, along with the sudden withdrawal of US troops, gave the Taliban the opportunity to take over the country. SA Senior, Abhirup Chatterjee, spoke on one of the reasons he felt like Afghanistan fell.

"The government couldn't rally the people to fight," said Chatterjee

Afghanis, both regular citizens and those employed by the government, were already preoccupied with trying to find the next meal for their family, which left them unable to defend against the swift force of the Taliban.

Afghanistan's experience with COVID is a lesson to the developed world. Global powers with developed economies should be looking to the underdeveloped countries in the battle to reign in the pandemic.

"I can't speak to the size of [COVID] effect but I think you can't discount anything that adds to what is already a difficult task," said Givhan, "then something else happens on top of you being sick, you're like, oh, I can't deal with this. This is too much."

