



# The Talon

## Gripping News



Volume III Issue I Onteora High School Boiceville, NY 12412 November 2020



Girls Locker Room

## Epic New Renovations Unveiled at Onteora

By Sophia Roberts

Though most of the state was on lockdown throughout the summer, a lot was going on at Onteora High School. Between brainstorming about how to get students safely back into the building, administration was overseeing sweeping renovations at Onteora High School.

The fitness center, library, and room 121 B have all been totally renovated. The fitness center was expanded, and it was given a new floor and all new equipment including virtual bikes, free runners, half racks, ellipticals, treadmills, and much more.

The library is in the process of being totally renovated, including new book shelves that are lower and make the space feel a lot more open. There is also a new classroom-like area, different independent work areas, reading nooks, and a new circulation desk.

There is an entirely new state-of-the-art lab in the science department. Each lab table has individual monitors that are connected to the teacher's workspace area at the front of the room for clearer viewing of lab demonstrations and presentations. The lab is soundproof and also includes better safety equipment.

Outside of the building, work is being done on the sports fields to resolve drainage issues. There is a new ADA compliant entryway and more handicap parking. The new entrance goes into the foyer before the highschool

gymnasium, and the foyer has also been completely redone with new doors and renovated bathrooms. A new vending machine and additional cabinets to display awards are also on the way. The impetus for the change was to make this foyer a striking entrance for people to come through during school events.

For years, the entrance into the boys locker room has been exposed to anyone walking in or out of the middle entrance to the gymnasium, and students had to go into the boys locker room to get to the physical education teachers' offices. This has all been resolved by cutting into the gym and adding a door to separate the boys locker room from the teachers' offices. The girls locker room also has a new entrance and has been completely renovated. It was made slightly smaller to accommodate for the new fitness center, but it looks and feels bigger than before. The lockers, floor, and bathroom in the girls locker room have all been redone.

Many of the bathrooms throughout the school have been redesigned as well. The locker room bathrooms have new tiling and showers, and they are handicap accessible. The foyer bathrooms and two staff bathrooms were also redone. Another gender neutral toilet was added next to the middle school art room, and the boys bathroom in that area was also redone. All the gender neutral and girls bathrooms will include feminine hygiene dispensers, and all the bathrooms have better soap.

Brianna Funck's Science classroom; Val Stewart's, Rebecca Joslin's, and Anne Gallin's Spanish classrooms; Laura Loheide's English classroom; and Jason Calinda's History classroom were all redone to incorporate active learning spaces. These classrooms have new

desks and chairs that can be easily moved to facilitate project-based and cooperative learning. All the new classrooms have new smartboards that are hooked up to tablets. Some of the new classrooms have cushioned chairs, adjustable desks, benches, and lounge chairs.

Some changes have also been made to accommodate for social distancing. Many of the students who have come into the building have already experienced these changes. Stickers marking proper social distancing have been put on the floor, and tape indicating which direction to walk on each side of the hall has also been put down. The stairways to the science wing are either up or down, not both, to ensure proper distancing. Students no longer type their student ID numbers into the keypad for the lunch line; instead, they have ID cards which get scanned. All meals are also free for the entirety of this school year.

Mr. Edelman says he "would like to thank the district for demonstrating a commitment to improving our school's learning environment." He is also "grateful to the student body for having provided feedback during the planning stages and that has been incorporated into these renovations." The returning-to-school process is a work in progress, but it's important to start somewhere and to learn going forward. It helps to know that there are so many new and exciting things to come back to.



Courtesy of Talon staff



Socially-Distanced Desks



Stationary Bikes in the Fitness Room



Fitness Center



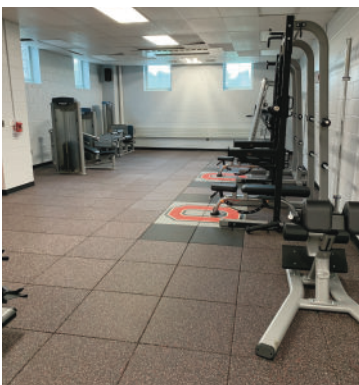
Six Feet Apart, Please!



Monitor in New Lab



State-of-the-Art Science Lab



Fitness Center



Renovated Room 121 B



New Library Shelves



Desk-Bikes in the Library



# Voting In 2020 As An Onteora Senior

By Nelson Del Tufo

In 2020, it feels as if each passing day is one for the ages. With our nation embroiled in the midst of a global pandemic, an economic crisis, and an incredibly devastating wildfire season, events of historical significance are the rule rather than the exception this year. Despite a ceaseless stream of breaking news and tragic reports, voters are forced to make sense of it all and head to the polls to decide on who they want guiding us through these crises and back to safety and stability.

In few past elections, if any, has the difference between the two major candidates been such as the difference between Joe Biden and Donald Trump. Vice President Biden represents a return to normalcy for many, as he harkens back to the years of the Obama administration when partisanship and crisis, while present, didn't seem as all-encompassing as they do today. Incumbent President Donald Trump on the other hand, with his un-politician-like mannerisms and dramatic statements, offers a more unconventional approach to government and policy.

Though nearly every student at Onteora has undoubtedly formed opinions about these men, only a lucky (or unlucky, depending on your perspective) few will actually be able to cast ballots this election season, and they will be faced with the choice of who they would like to lead the country. I have spoken to several eligible voters in the senior class at Onteora, and their opinions, while not necessarily a snapshot of the exact political persuasion of the entire class, offer an insight into the state of the race among the future movers and shakers of the country.

The first student whom I talked to was Owen Allison, who told me that he would "most likely" vote for Donald Trump this year. He said that he didn't support Trump in the 2016 Republican primary, but that given the

choice this year between Biden and the current president, he supported Trump because of his record on jobs and the economy, which is the most important issue to Owen.

"He's got a loudmouth, but he's done a lot," Owen told me during our interview. "After this whole COVID pandemic goes away, we're going to need to build a strong economy, and that's what Donald Trump did before COVID." He made sure to stress that he didn't love either candidate and that both were "focusing on November 3rd when they should be focusing on the country." He added that at the present time, Joe Biden just needed to do more to win him over.

I talked to Raffie Legnini next, whose opinions were quite different from Owen's. He told me that he was voting for Vice President Biden because "he's just an ordinary guy." While Owen acknowledged President Trump's moral imperfections, he didn't see those traits as extremely important when it came to voting for him. Raffie, on the other hand, told me that

he thought Donald Trump's character was very important to any discussion about him as a candidate. Raffie is voting for Democrats up and down the ballot this year because he supports their agenda broadly. He also noted that the things Donald Trump says are often racist and offensive, and even though he "doesn't want to believe" statements like "all Trump supporters are racist," sometimes when he listens to the president, he can't help but feel that way.

I talked to Josh Odato next. He also supports Joe Biden over Donald Trump and echoed a lot of Raffie's concerns when affirming his support for Biden. Josh told me he believes that Donald Trump is a racist, and the president's character is an important factor in his support for Joe Biden. Josh went on to say that, in addition to not liking Trump, he specifically supported the Democratic platform, especially gun control and the fact that they want to "protect and expand on Obamacare." Healthcare was actually Josh's number one issue, and he told me that the only way he could support the president is if

he "had plans to keep Obamacare." Trump's famous refrain that he's going to "repeal and replace" the popular health-care reform makes this unlikely.

Next, I talked to Ori Grady, who was yet another Biden supporter, sporting a Joe Biden hat during our video interview. In discussing his support for the former Vice President, Ori focused on Biden as a unifying figure.

"He speaks to the people and cares what the majority of people think," Ori said of Biden. "The way [Trump] talked about Black Lives Matter, and denied the fact that there's a global pandemic," Ori said, proved that Trump only cares about winning, not about what's best for the country.

Finally, I contacted Frida Emilia and asked for her thoughts on the race. She, too, supports Joe Biden over Donald Trump and agreed with all the previous Biden supporters that Joe Biden had a better moral character than the president. Though she believes that the morals of a president are very important,

when I asked her what the most important issue was, she told me that to her it was climate change, and she felt that Joe Biden's position was much stronger than the president's. Frida also mentioned that the Green New Deal - an ambitious Democratic plan to combat the effects of global warming by converting our energy grid to renewable energy - is "important because it will create so many new jobs for people" through the creation of new solar and wind farms and other environmentally friendly projects. Though Joe Biden does not endorse the plan wholly, he has shown support for many of the policy ideas in it. It is likely that some form of the Green New Deal would be passed under his administration, so long as the Democrats win the Senate.

Though the students with whom I spoke held conflicting beliefs, there was a good deal of overlap between people. Both Owen and Josh, for instance, told me that they supported the Black Lives Matter protests wholeheartedly, but they didn't support the violent protests that were tangentially related to the movement. Furthermore, everyone whom I talked to agreed that the current hyper-polarized political climate is a problem that needs to be addressed, despite disagreement about the best solutions. Owen, the only Trump supporter I was able to get a hold of, even said that he thought that Joe Biden won the first presidential debate and that Donald Trump was only making things worse by acting so aggressively on stage.

It's easy to see the two camps behind each candidate as irreconcilable groups. Biden supporters often see the president as dangerous and unpleasant, while Trump supporters think he's someone who can get things done despite (and maybe because of) his unprecedented behavior. Though the state of current affairs in this country is a contentious and demoralizing one, speaking to my classmates reminded me that no matter your political persuasion, and no matter how angry the opposing candidate or party makes you, we have a lot in common, and that is what's most important.



Courtesy of Natalie Horberg



# The World's Tastiest Industry Meets the Effects of Covid-19

By Mikayla Stock

The beginning of 2020 brought hope of a clean slate for all who celebrated the new year. Restaurants were filled to maximum capacity with guests anxiously waiting for the promise of midnight, enjoying the work of the chefs and mixologists who strove to make their last hurrah of the holiday season a memorable one. On that fateful evening, no one would have expected what was to come in the following months. That very night I sat within the dimly lit corner of my own place of business with the anticipation of a year filled with work in one of my favorite fields. Now I sit here jobless and void of the magic of the food industry along with the many others whose work lives have been af-

ected by COVID-19.

According to the National Restaurant Association, over 15 million people are employed in the restaurant industry in the United States, with those workers spread over 1 million businesses. Furthermore, the projected sales of the industry in 2020 totaled to \$899 billion, up by 4% from 2019.

The impact of stay-at-home orders on businesses served shaky results as restaurants lost a total of \$120 billion in the three months following the onset of the pandemic. Throughout the nation, many restaurant owners were unsure as to whether or not their businesses would ever welcome guests again, and for some the grim reality of COVID-19's hard hit brought an end to their livelihood as it became impossible to amend the fragile ground they walked on.

For years, New York City has been known as one of the greatest food cities in the world thanks to its fresh take on both modern and age-old cuisines and its diverse approach to flavors, cultures, and experiences. Normally bustling with people,



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

the restaurant industry is one of the most defining characteristics of New York. As a result of the disaster of the pandemic shocking the city with full force, an audit released by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli predicts that up to a half of all NYC restaurants and bars could close for good as a result of the state's limits following the shutdown.

Highly regarded as one of New York's finest restaurants, Eleven Madison Park holds three Michelin stars and a reputation of the world's No.1 restaurant in 2017. Chef and Owner Daniel Humm told the *Bloomberg Pursuit* in May that "there [was] definitely a question mark over Eleven Madison Park - if it [would] reopen," stating that to do so would "take millions of dollars." Today Humm's creation has secured sufficient funds and is set to reopen at some point in the following months, yet the exact date that the restaurant will begin to host guests again is still unknown.

At the local level, many restaurants in the Hudson Valley faced uncertainties regarding the state of their businesses at the start of the pandemic. Chef and owner Eryn Stutts of PAKT in midtown-Kingston told *The River* in May that "she recognized immediately... her establishment could not survive under Cuomo's shutdown order." She chose to close her dining room early on, out of fear that she would be unable to pay her employees for the time they had

already worked. Stutts explained her early realizations on the reality of the situation, claiming, with a weight on her heart, that "the restaurant industry is over."

I recently spoke with Chef and Owner of Mexican Kitchen in New Paltz Adam Monteverde in New Paltz as he outlined his own fears during the early days of the pandemic. He revealed that the switch to take-out only took a toll on his business: He had to lay off 21 employees within the first week of shutdown orders. Monteverde stated that as a chef, the sight of an empty dining room was "just sad overall" and that it "hurts your heart." He explained that the process of opening his doors again "was like starting with a new business, but in the age of Covid" and that the hospitality industry became "less about the experience and mainly about the food itself." He is now back up and running things as best as he can, relieved his business has had much suc-

cess. Such words cannot be said for all restaurants in New Paltz, as he highlighted that many of his colleagues are "hanging on by a thread." Monteverde is set to open a new restaurant/bakery in 2021 and revealed that his experience with starting a business during the pandemic has been "emotionally scary, kind of frightening, but as smooth as it can be."

As the restaurant industry begins its slow and steady climb towards reopening, many business owners continue on the unfortunate road of financial struggle. Although it may be a long time before we can enjoy the industry to its fullest extent, we can still do all that is possible to support our local businesses during these particularly rough days. Whether the eating method of choice is curbside, outdoor, or indoor with limited capacity, each guest can begin to take the necessary steps to start rebuilding the livelihood of local restaurants one meal at a time.



Courtesy of Mikayla Stock



Mexican Kitchen Owner Adam Monteverde and co-owner Lauren Mias, Courtesy of Mikayla Stock



# Onteora District Local Election Roundup

By Nelson Del Tufo

Ever since the first Democrats announced their intention to run for president all the way back in January 2019, electoral news has been dominated by the race for Commander-in-Chief. Despite this nationwide obsession with the presidential contest, local races are arguably more important. The president is undeniably important, but the White House is not the sole locus of power in this country. Decisions about property tax assessment and zoning regulation are significant, and so are the local politicians who make them.



Michelle Hinchey speaking at her campaign launch last year, Courtesy of the Hinchey Campaign

The Onteora School district lies on the border between the liberal Hudson Valley and conservative Western New York. As such, the four towns which make up the district have an odd mix of representatives. On the one hand, incumbent Democrat Kevin Cahill has represented the area in the New York State Assembly since 1992, fending off a republican challenger by a safe margin again this year. On the other hand, the area is the scene of some fierce political competition.

For instance, Onteora is in the center of New York's 19th congressional district, a swing district that has garnered attention from national media. Our current congressman, Antonio Delgado, is a moderate Democrat who supports a public healthcare option and generally votes in line with his Democratic colleagues. This year he was up for reelection for the first time, and in a tight race looks to have defeated Republican challenger Kyle Van De Water, a United States Army Veteran

and attorney from Dutchess County, who stressed his support for stricter immigration and his opposition to gun control. Delgado, who declared victory on Wednesday the 11th, is leading Van De Water by a several-thousand vote margin that is likely to increase as absentee ballots are counted.

At the same time as the whole Onteora District was deciding between Delgado and Van De Water for Congress, two different parts of the district were



Kevin Cahill (right) standing with Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan (left) in the State Assembly Chamber in Albany, Courtesy of the Cahill Campaign.

making separate decisions when it came to the state Senate. In Woodstock and Hurley, voters were deciding between Democrat Michelle Hinchey and Republican Richard Amedure when it came to representing New York's 46th State Senate district, which stretches from Kingston to Canajoharie. Hinchey, who received endorsements from many local Union chapters and women's groups, campaigned on a platform of rural infrastructure investment

and expanding healthcare access. Amedure, a former State Trooper, argued to voters that by electing him, they were helping to prevent one-party rule in the state, which is dominated by Democrats. On election night, Amedure narrowly led, but the margin is shrinking as absentee ballots are counted. As of November 13th, the race has not been called.

Voters in the Shandaken and Olive, however, did not see Hinchey or Amedure on their ballots. Instead, these folks, who reside in the sprawling 51st State Senate district, decided between Jim Barber - a Democrat, farmer, and former USDA director for New York - and Peter Oberacker - a Republican Oswego County legislator and businessman. The district is overwhelmingly rural and dominated by farmland, and as a result, much of the focus of both campaigns was on property tax reform and rural infrastructure, though Barber stressed the importance of environmental protection and renewable energy resources. Barber, who was down by several thousand votes as results came in, conceded to Oberacker on election night.



Kyle Van De Water speaking to the Ulster County Republican Committee earlier this year, courtesy of the Van De Water Campaign



Peter Oberacker, courtesy of the Oberacker Campaign



# The Race to Develop a COVID-19 Vaccine

Shane Stackpole

Over this past month, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Bruce Walker, and David Baltimore have given lectures through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on the most pressing issue right now: COVID-19. As a student in the Community Mentorship program, I am enrolled in the exclusive course provided by MIT that focuses on the immunology and epidemiology behind COVID-19. As such, I have adopted an analytical perspective on the virus, a topic ripe with false information. I have been exposed to remarkable information on the vaccine that has so wrongfully become part of a political stunt.

In 1981, the AIDS epidemic caused by the HIV virus exponentially surged. Its outbreak was 39 years ago - so why is there no HIV vaccine yet? The simple answer is that developing a vaccine is no walk in the park. It is a long and exacting process, one that must not be rushed. However, science has significantly advanced since then. The rate at which a COVID-19 vaccine has progressed is significantly faster than the cure to any previous serious health issue. It took four years to manufacture an AIDS diagnostic test; for COVID-19, it took just one month. The research, development, and issuance of a global vaccine is an



Courtesy of Zach Calinda

exceptionally difficult process, but it is very possible with today's remarkable biotechnology and scientific knowledge.

On January 11th, 2020, the genetic sequence for SARS-COV-2, the official name of the virus that causes COVID-19, was deciphered and released. This catalyzed an international response among the scientific and medical communities and has prompted them to dive into research. Since then, major institutions across the world have been researching the nature of SARS-COV-2 and a vaccination.

While Americans were in quarantine binge watching Tiger King, the first COVID-19 vaccine trial began. On March 16th, Kaiser Permanente Wash-

ington Health Research Institute facilitated the first-ever injection of a potential vaccine to four patients. However, this federally funded trial was only in phase one of the several-step process towards issuing a vaccine.

Once a vaccine is designed, virologists will study the stimulated immune response both in humans and in animals such as monkeys and mice. If this pre-clinical stage is successful, scientists will give the vaccine to an exclusive group of patients. Stage two and three focus on expanding the number of participants and the type of participants. Volunteers of all ages, biological sex, and health stability are included and studied. Researchers not only focus on the participants' immune responses, but also on the vaccine's side effects and repercussions.

Though many SARS-COV-2 vaccine trials have made it to the final two phases, they have been halted due to concerns in participants' symptoms. United States pharmaceutical companies Johnson & Johnson and Eli Lilly have recently announced plans to delay trials after participants developed "adverse reactions." This description is purposefully vague because the companies have yet to understand the abnormal symptoms. In early September, another company called AstraZeneca

paused their trial due to "a single event of an unexplained illness" that presented itself as an inflammation of the spinal cord. It is good to hear that many clinics have taken the appropriate measures to halt trials because it ensures that an approved vaccine will be as safe and refined as possible.

The date at which a vaccine is approved by the F.D.A.'s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research is highly controversial and constantly debated. In late August, President Trump pledged that a vaccine would be nationally available by the end of 2020. This directly contradicts public health officials, such as Dr. Anthony Fauci, who announced that a SARS-COV-2 vaccine will not be "widely available" to the American people until "several months" into 2021. To put it simply: A vaccine will be distributed when it is entirely safe and effective, but we don't know when that will be.

It seems that everyone, including politicians, has spread false



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

There have always been individuals who have challenged scientific methods, but their influence has particularly increased throughout this pandemic. Stephen Thomas, MD, chief of Infectious Diseases at Upstate University Hospital explains that the reason behind this increase "is likely multifactorial, including the influence of a scary pandemic and peoples emotional response, the influence of different elected and non-elected community leaders, and the unchecked flow of information flying around social media." It is imperative



information about a vaccine. Throughout the pandemic, some Americans have persistently denied the veracity of the science. The topic of a COVID-19 vaccine has been handled like a political pawn and has become a political game. As someone intending on pursuing biochemistry, it's troubling to watch the scientific community be manipulated and taken advantage of by ignorant and misinformed individuals. Medical student Michael Conroy expresses, "From the local health departments to the Center for Disease Control, these institutions are filled with individuals working in overdrive every day to combat this pandemic. Undermining this institution harms all Americans and fuels an unnecessarily prevalent and deadly pandemic."

that Americans put their trust in experts like Thomas and the validity of science for the remainder of the pandemic.





# Music Recommendations

By Mikayla Stock

## Visions by Grimes (2012)

Canadian singer/songwriter Grimes' third studio album was created in a period of three weeks using Apple's Garage-Band software. Its sound falls somewhere in between synth-pop, dream-pop, and experimental, but it sounds more like the soundtrack to an intergalactic dream sequence. Each track's eclectic, electronic delivery transports you to something out of a hallucination, or perhaps out of Elon

Musk's very own SpaceX Falcon 9. Fresh, irregular, and perhaps a little confusing, every track leaves me feeling like I've experienced a spiritual rebirth...or perhaps like I've become a robot.

Chances are you've heard "Oblivion" and "Genesis," and I suggest starting out with them. Beyond those two, I would recommend "Vowels = space and time," "Colour of Moonlight (Antiochus)" ft. Doldrums, "Circumambient," "Symphonia IX (My Wait Is U)," and "Skin." Seriously though, listen to all of them.

## "Meet Me At Our Spot" by THE ANXIETY (2020)

This track is the result of masterminds WILLOW and Tyler

Cole, coming fresh off the press from their self-titled debut album and collaborative project, *THE ANXIETY*.

The artists' goal was to create a project that showcased the anxiety they experience on a daily basis and how they cope with its existence. According to the duo, they wanted to create a sound that "embodies the meaning of that personal unease" and expresses "the overwhelming feeling of a person on the brink of an attack."

The eighth track of the album, "Meet Me At Our Spot," reflects on the insomnia that results from anxiety, which both individuals express in their own verses. When the two come together, they express a sort of euphoric form of escapism from

the demons of their mental state, and the sound is like a breath of fresh air. This song feels all too relatable as of late, and I can't even tell you how many times I've wished I was driving down the 101 with a friend blasting this track and escaping from my own inner demons. But hey, that's 2020.

## "Sympathy" by Vampire Weekend (2019)

Vampire Weekend holds an extremely special place in my heart. As my favorite band since I can remember, I don't think I've ever heard a song of theirs that I didn't immediately fall in love with. "Sympathy," the eleventh track in the band's latest album *Father of the Bride* is no exception. With its snappy, Western sound, "Sympathy"

takes the cake as one of my favorite songs of 2019. It's guaranteed to make you feel like you're running through the desert as a camera pans onto the eyes of both you and your cowboy enemy.

If you're going to listen to one Vampire Weekend song, I only hope you give them all a shot. If you don't like at least one track, I'll seriously give you my life savings. I'm that confident that at least one of their songs will draw you in as much as they do me.

Happy listening!



Courtesy of @theanxiety on Instagram



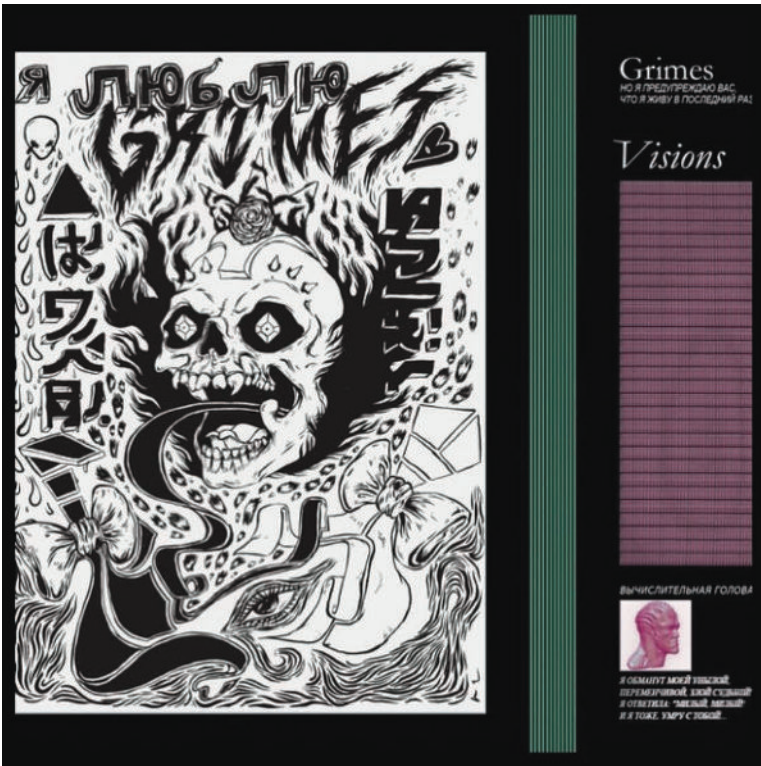
Courtesy of @theanxiety on Instagram



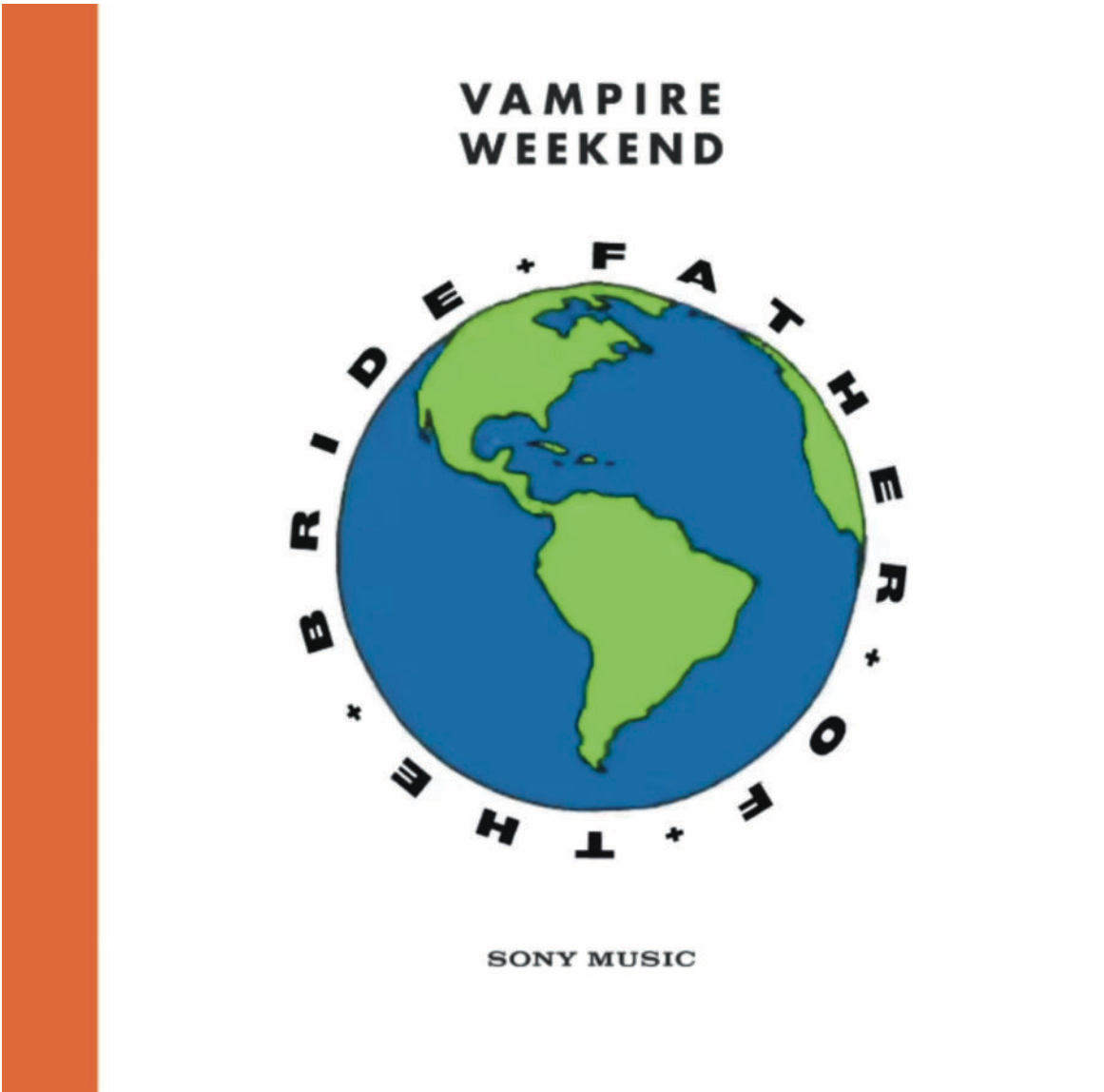
Vampire Weekend, Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



Grimes, Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



VISIONS album cover, Courtesy of @indie\_buzzard on Instagram



Courtesy of @vampireweekend on Instagram



# What Onteora Seniors Wish They Knew About College Admissions When they were Freshmen

By Emily Peck

All throughout high school I had a perception that the second the fall of senior year started, a college-application-apocalypse would swarm me. While I know this sounds ridiculous and wildly hyperbolic, many of my peers also expected a storm of essays, interviews, and rejection to come rolling in.

The reality, while admittedly less exciting, is much more manageable. Onteora senior Alana Wood assures, "it honestly isn't as scary as it seems."

Most four-year colleges require a personal essay, supplemental essays, general information, and financial information. A student submits the same personal essay to every college (this is also called the "college essay").

Then each college asks for different supplemental essays. I thought supplemental essays were going to be multi-page papers, but most of the colleges I'm applying to only require a paragraph or two.

Finally, the general info and financial aid documents are a bit of a pain, but as long as students tackle them early and with a guardian, they are not a problem.

## Freshmen

Now, while the actual applying to college does not start until the summer before senior year, students should be prepping for this process all through high school.

To start, every freshman needs to keep an activities list. You should write down the activity, how long you did it for, and any impacts it had on you. You should participate in activities that matter to you and try out a

bunch of clubs. You will never find one you love if you don't go out of your comfort zone and attend new club meetings.

## Sophomores

Tenth graders should start researching colleges. This is as simple as browsing college websites, watching "a day in the life" videos of college students on YouTube, and talking with guidance counselors about how to determine what colleges would be a good fit for you.

Ask guidance counselors which colleges students similar to you like; in fact, ask students who are similar to you what colleges they like. One of the best ways to research colleges is to talk to your peers about their college research.

You should also reach out to current students at colleges you like, either through personal connections or contacts provided by the school. Ask them what their favorite and least things about the school are, why they attended the school, and any other burning questions you have.

Students should think about if they want a big university or a small college, if they want to be near a city, and what kind of campus culture they want.

High schoolers should also tour colleges whenever possible. Oakwood High School senior Lila Ressler laments, "I wish I knew how important it was to visit early." But she follows it up with, "Obviously this year is crazy, but if I had visited early junior year or sophomore year that would have been so much better in retrospect."

College tours are important to learn what a student wants in their college experience. If travelling to colleges is difficult for students, planning trips with friends and applying to a college's low income student tour program are other options.

## Juniors

In eleventh grade, you should start brainstorming about what makes you, you. The best college essays are the ones overflowing with student passion, so brainstorm what you care about and why you care about it. The

personal essay should also be written in eleventh grade, but don't freak out about it. This essay is intended to tell admissions officers something about you through a story from your life.

"The reality, while admittedly less exciting, is much more manageable"

My advice is to just sit down one day and write about something you care about. Make sure to make the essay narrative and slyly weave in details about yourself. There is a fine balance in the personal essay between just stating what you are trying to say and hiding what you are trying to say in too much narration. This balance is tricky, so start early to have time to go back and tease out your exact message later.

## Seniors

Even though the work needed to apply to college in senior year is less than most students expect, this does not mean the process is easy. Every essay needs to be read and then reread and then read again. First by the student, and then by a trusted teacher. Too many opinions on college essays muddles a student's original intent.

Because of the in-depth revision process, I suggest starting the personal essay by the July before senior year and supplemental essays in August of senior year. I only wrote one or two college essay paragraphs a week this August, but this gave me a solid head start come fall. Even if you just make a Common App account and start to look at college's supplements in August, you will be in better shape come fall.

Financial aid documents should also be done in October since they come out October first and should not be left to the last minute. College application and financial aid information deadlines are non-negotiable, so submitting applications and fi-

nancial information slightly early is always best.

I think it is easy to get lost in the process or overwhelmed. But it is essential that you get out of your head and remember that you should write about what you are passionate about, and you shouldn't write what you think the college wants to hear. Honestly, all the college wants to hear is who you are.

If you're feeling overwhelmed about the process you can contact admissions officers at colleges you like, reach out to your guidance counselor, or ask an Onteora senior a question. I wish I had talked to seniors when I was a freshman. If I did, I would have saved myself a lot of worry and confusion.



Courtesy of Tahlula Potter



Club	Description	Advisor	President(s)	Meeting Dates	How to Join
Art Club	Art Club is for all the creative souls out there. Art-making is so important in our world today, and it is healthy and good for your mind and body. This club offers the space and time for students to create artwork for themselves, others, and make a positive difference in our world.	Mrs. Wentland	Ava Calinda	Alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays (11/17, and 12/1)	Email Ms. Wentland and she will send you an invite
French Club	French Club promotes the French language and Francophone culture through social activities such as cooking (and eating) French food and watching French movies as well as fundraising for travel to Francophone destinations and senior scholarships. Anyone can join French club (even if they don't take French)!	Ms. Nelson	Sophia Roberts and Eva Donato	Every other Monday (10/26, 11/9)	Email Ms. Nelson to be added to the classroom
Spanish Club	Spanish club speaks in Spanish, presents different cultural topics, watches Spanish movies, reads Spanish stories, and fundraises for different causes every year. We focus on promoting and learning more about the wide variety of Spanish culture. Grades 9-12 are eligible to join!	Sra. Garcia	Shayne Durkin	Usually every week on Tuesday or Friday	Email Sra. Garcia, Shayne Durkin, or Edelmira Sanchez
Science Olympiad	We compete in 23 events that encompass the four main science subjects; each event is more detailed than typical high school curricula. Several events allow students to build and design structures that need to perform a task or function. This year, we are competing in 15 "study" events at our competition on February 6th. Typically we perform well enough to go to the State Competition in Syracuse, although it was cancelled last year for obvious reasons.	Mr. Keenan		Thursday the 5th, and then are trying to switch to Monday at 3:30 based on feedback.	Email Mr. Keenan, only 6 spaces left
GSA (Gender & Sexuality Alliance)	Onteora GSA-Pride Alliance brings together and recognizes lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer, questioning and straight students in a positive and non-judgmental environment where they can fully express their individuality and share experiences. The intent is to create alliances that increase awareness, decrease prejudices and create a safe school atmosphere for all.	Ms. Nelsen	Sophie Frank	Every other Thursday (starting Thursday 10/29)	send an e-mail to Ms. Nelson or to Ms. Curlew (acurlew@onteora.k12.ny.us)
HMC	Harvard Model Congress is a legislative simulation that will happen virtually this year. Students act in their roles in the House, Senate, and special programs as they serve on committees and participate in caucuses and full sessions with the goal of passing legislation.	Ms. Curlew		Tuesdays, sometimes in Nov and Dec and weekly in Jan and Feb.	Info about try-outs will come through social studies classes.
TUFS	Teaming Up For Success is about connecting students to the school experience by creating positive, unique experiences/connections with school. Members have been enjoying virtual party games, "google" workshops, and information on other strategies on how to optimize their remote experience with school. Mrs. Weisz has also offered "lunch meets"	Ms. Schenker and Ms. Weisz	Madison Quick	Meeting monthly, the last Tuesday of the Month	Email Ms. Schenker or Ms. Weisz to express your interest in the club
	weekly for students who would prefer to connect with peers during their lunch period. We are looking forward to in person field trips in the future, but hope to do some virtual trips this year.				
Lit Mag	Lit Mag is a fun opportunity to come together with people who love to read, write, draw, paint, take photos, or just drink tea. Lit Mag publishes two editions of The Reservoir, Onteora's Literary Magazine, every fall and spring to showcase student work! By being in Lit Mag, students have a voice in shaping what the next edition of The Reservoir will be while spending time with friends in the process.	Mr. Epstein	Maggie Turck	Mondays at 3:30	join Lit Mag through the code cczoaqq in the Google Classroom!
Yearbook	The Onteora Record Yearbook is open to all students grades 9-12 and its purpose is to gather the material for and produce an original yearbook each year. This process takes the full year and students interested in photography or who are creative and organized in general would enjoy participating in this club.	Mr. Connolly	Cambria D'Aprile	Every other week, not on a set day	Contact Cambria D'Aprile to be added to the classroom
Student Government	All Onteora students are welcome to come to Student Government meetings and voice their concerns because our goal is to represent everyone at Onteora! In Student Government, officers that are elected by the student body address problems brought to us by students. Then we work with the student body, administration, and the school board to come up with plans to solve those issues.	Mr. Connolly	Emily Peck	Every other Friday (10/30, 11/13, 11/27), etc.	Email Mr. Connolly (bconnolly@onteora.k12.ny.us)



Human Rights Club	The Human Rights Club promotes human rights. We follow issues such as mass incarceration, the wrongful deaths of POC at the hands of police, antisemitism, and the #METOO movement. We will also follow the social issues in our school that heavily impact many students but often go unresolved. Our environment gives students the opportunity to discuss issues and take the necessary steps to solve them in order to make our school a better place. We will consistently advocate for students of minority backgrounds and promote social justice.	Mr. Knoche	Shane Stackpole	Alternate Mondays and Thursdays (10/22, 10/26, 11/5, 11/9, 11/19)	Class code: zfafbsy
Lyceum Club	What lies at the intersection between fury and good humor, hopelessness and passion, intellect, and emotion? ◆ Philosophy Club ◆ As high schoolers, many of us find ourselves yearning for a place to voice our thoughts on weighty subjects where we have no fear of harsh judgment or personal attacks; we want to engage in meaningful conversations in a constructive, enlightening way. Whether you're interested in STEM, music, the arts, or the humanities, philosophy is an incredibly valuable field of study that can refine your logical reasoning skills and help you become a stronger thinker. With core tenants of honesty and openness, we invite club members to decide the weekly themes of discussion and ask as many questions as needed in order to feel confident in sharing their own opinions. Philosophy Club is welcoming towards anyone and everyone—the more perspectives there are at the table, the richer exchange of views we can have.	Mr. Colevas	Natalie Horberg	Every Tuesday (2:45pm-4:00pm)	Grades 9-12 are welcome. Students need not have taken Philosophy class in order to attend. Email Mr. Colevas to be added to the classroom.
Newspaper Club	Every step of creating the newspaper is a collaborative project. Regardless of your experience, your thoughts about a piece will always be respected. Every member of The Talon is encouraged to learn how to use layout software and try their hand at any part they're curious about. The Talon is a group of collaborators who care deeply about putting out the best paper we can, whether that means delivering hard-hitting stories about what's going on in our world or sharing the thoughts and experiences of our students, or both. If you're looking for a creative club with a community behind it where there are chances for leadership and absolutely everyone is welcome, newspaper is the club for you.	Ms. Conroy	Emily Peck and Sophia Roberts	We meet often, and meeting dates are always posted in the classroom.	Class code: flpwvoy
SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions)	We will positively impact the Onteora community by abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and any other drugs; promoting a "No Use" message; making every effort possible to prevent friends from making destructive decisions; being a positive role model for peers and younger students; working hard to assist those who are in need; attending all meetings and participating in all activities possible.	Ms. Scherer		Thursdays	Email Ms. Scherer
DECA	DECA is a club that prepares students for careers in business, entrepreneurship, and management with competition and collaboration.	Ms. Goho			Contact Ms. Goho
Chamber Ensemble	Chamber Ensemble is a small Orchestra of students that play a higher level of music. We perform not just at our school concerts, but also at other events as well. Students are selected based on their participation and effort in Orchestra, and also any other ensemble participation.	Mrs. Boyer	Max Mielcarek	Tuesdays	Students are selected to join (See description for more info)
Jazz Ensemble	Jazz Ensemble is open to students in grades 7-12 that are experienced on their instrument. Rehearsals will be virtual and will be starting soon. Rehearsals will be held after school with small sections of the ensemble. The goal will be to perform pieces throughout the year virtually to post on the schools web page for viewing by all.	Mr. Murphy			Email Mr. Murphy if interested
NHS	National Honor Society is one of the nation's premier organizations that promotes recognition for students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of character, scholarship, leadership, and service. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to service to both school and the community, hence, using their talents to improve society. Students that qualify and are accepted to NHS must maintain these high standards to continue their eligibility in the organization. Thus, it is both an honor and commitment to be a member.	Ms. Loheide	Maggie Turck	Wednesdays	Applications open in March and are due by April, and students with an average of 85 and above are eligible to apply.



# Claw Snaps October 2020: Thoughts about online school so far?

**Sophia Wentland, Grade 11:**

"It's horrible and stressful, and teachers are giving way too much work.

It's very challenging in terms of that I'm sitting in front of a computer from 7:40 to 2:35, and then I'm doing another 1-5 hours of homework.

It's just a lot of screen time and not a lot of social interaction.

It's also really hard to find motivation, and it doesn't seem very help-based, at least not in the days I go in."

**EJ Martello, Grade 10:**

"Terrible! Just like everyday things are the same amount of difficulty. Part of me likes the consistency, but on the other hand, it's terrible."

**Ada Helm, Grade 9:**

"I don't mind getting to stay home, but I also find it incredibly difficult to pay attention. It's gotten way harder to keep track of assignments. Like way harder."

**Stella Kowalsky, Grade 11:**

"It's hard to focus. There is way too much screen time and too much homework."

**Natalie Horberg, Grade 12:**

"There are fun moments, but virtual learning is exhausting more than anything."

**Ian Helm, Grade 12:**

"The workload is really overwhelming."

**Autumn Schouten, Grade 11:**

"Online school is pretty chill, and it's nice to have study halls off because I can go outside or get food during them."

**Nora Vogt, Grade 11:**

"I like online school this year better than last year's hybrid. There is more order, and it requires me to be more accountable."

**Sophia Roberts, Grade 12:**

"The thing I've struggled with most is self motivation, and I also miss face-to-face interaction with both my peers and teachers.

I think that the administration and teachers are doing the best they can to support the student body, though."

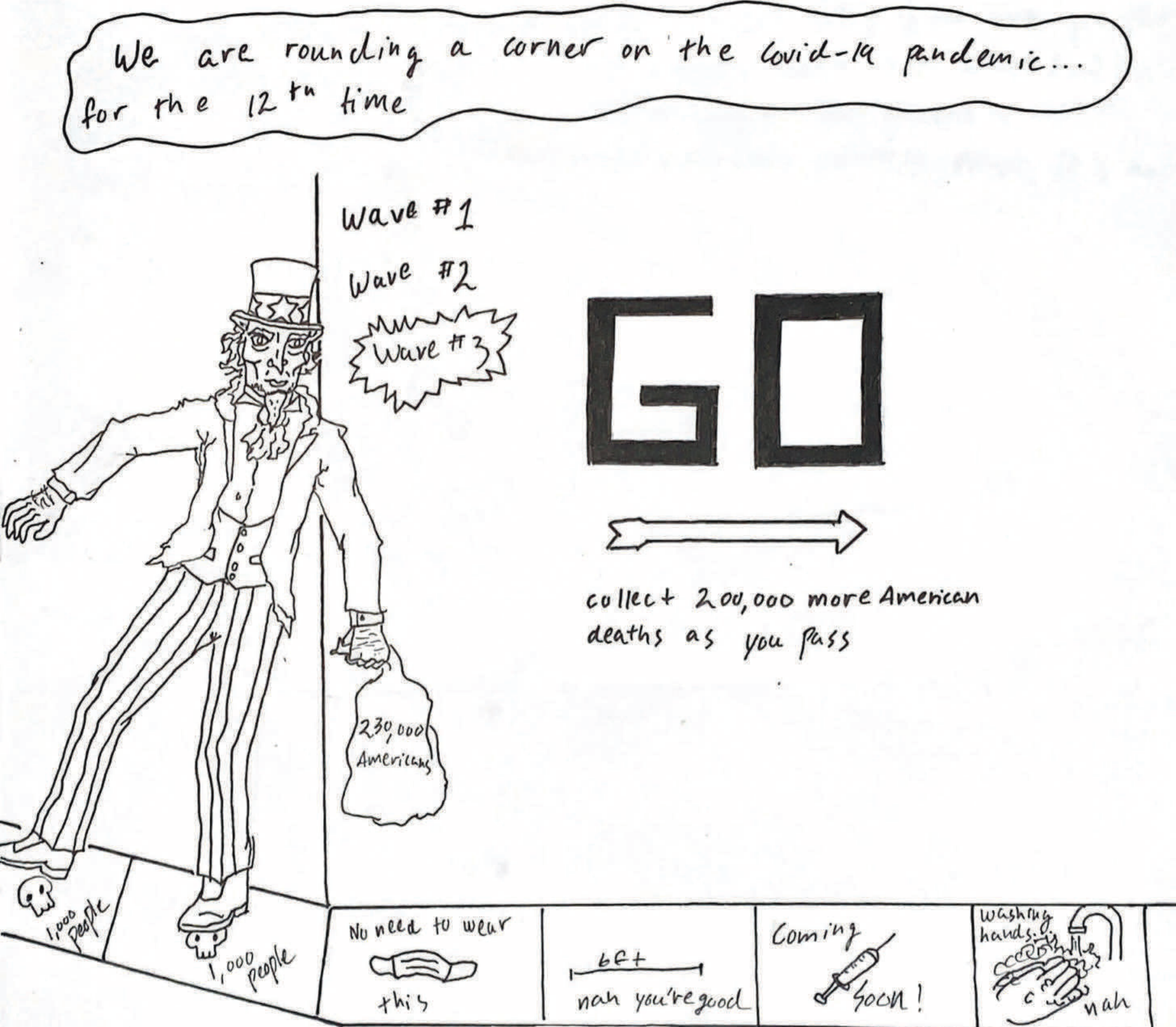
**Maddy Taylor, Grade 10:**

"I hate it because of mental health."

Mon 26	Tue 27	Wed 28	Thu 29	Fri 30
Assignment: Throwing on as lead up to Disc	Assignment: Classwork #9 - derivative of ln x, e^x, a^x 8:35 AM	Assignment: New and Improved Socktober/Novembrrr Poster	Assignment: Classwork Assignment #10 - Derivative of Inverse Functions 8:35 AM	Assignment: Disc Golf Intro
Assignment: RfW - Read Chapter 12: Clarity & 13: Tracking Shifts	Assignment: MT 2020 Topic 1: Presidential Characteristics 10:00 AM		Assignment: MT Topic 2: Gentrification 10:00 AM	Assignment: News 10/30
Assignment: Workbook p. 32 Structure and Function of Membranes 10 AM	Assignment: Biozone Catalase Experiment 10:38 AM		Assignment: Moot Court: Federalism 1:00 PM	Assignment: 6 verbes Indispensables
Assignment: Election 10 PM			Assignment: Rules for Writers: Modifiers - Chapters 11 & 12 & Learning Curve	Assignment: News
Assignment: Designing a Restaurant Menu				Assignment: Senior Will
				Assignment: Weekly Assignment #7 - (Old #6) 3:00 PM

Assignment List, Courtesy of Talon Staff





I know this is a dark subject, that's why I'm making light of it. Also I know technically we actually never left wave 1 of the pandemic, but I made for a better comic. But seriously, wear a mask, practice social distancing, and have common sense, it's not that hard.

Courtesy of Zach Calinda

The Talon Staff:

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- Faculty Adviser: Elaine Conroy



# Philosophical Fly-By

## Background of Industrial Agriculture

By Joey Driscoll

Industrial agriculture is the large-scale, fast paced production of crops and, in our case, livestock. Unlike your local grass-fed farms that humanely produce various animal products, industrial farms are known to abuse animals, destroy the land they are stationed on, exploit workers, and excrete massive amounts of pollution. Just a quick peek into the meat packing industry is enough to repulse the candid consumer: The meat you pick up nicely plastic-wrapped from your supermarket comes from a plethora of unethical, inhumane, dangerous, unsanitary, and frankly illegal practices. This includes keeping large numbers of animals in small cages, beating animals relentlessly if they don't "behave," having so few safety precautions

that many workers lose fingers, hands, or arms in machines, and dumping waste into nearby bodies of water. The huge amounts of manure also give off such high levels of greenhouse gases, specifically methane, that factory farming is one of the leading contributors to the climate crisis. While government intervention has occurred, the Meat Inspection Act and others have unfortunately proven largely unenforced, and huge industrial corporations are able to dodge certain regulations in order to maximize profits.

## Arguments Against Moral Vegetarianism

By Joey Driscoll

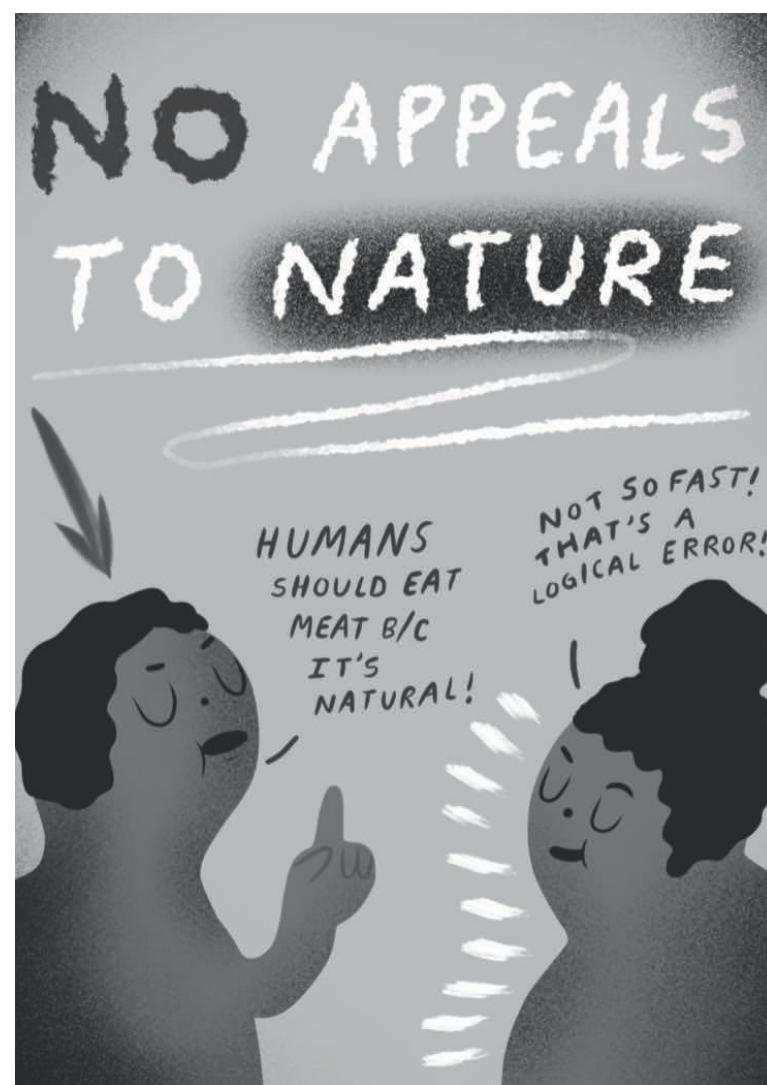
Before we discuss the opposing argument, a valid argument concluding that factory farming is morally permissible is extremely hard to come by, if even

possible. Any arguments opposing moral veganism refer strictly to humane, local farming and slaughtering. Also, the popular claim that it is "human nature" to eat meat is an appeal to nature, a logical fallacy that always renders an argument invalid. The appeal to nature fallacy essentially states that it is erroneous to argue that "it is natural; therefore it is moral" or that "it is unnatural; therefore it is immoral." That being said, the leading argument against moral veganism stems from the basic premise that it is better to have existed than it is to have never existed. While some nihilists and cynics would say the opposite, this premise remains difficult to refute. Because it is better to have existed than to never have existed, it is better to bring new lives into the world rather than prevent new lives from being created. Therefore, it is better to produce more animals, give them a good quality of life, and humanely slaughter them than to not bring those lives into the world in the first place. The argument is eerily watertight, as all of the pretentious philosophy students who attempted to disprove it were met with defeat.

## Arguments For Moral Vegetarianism

By Sophia Roberts:

The immorality of eating meat stems from an argument about personhood--the criteria and status of being a person. Most people agree that personhood should be assigned to all humans, at any post-birth developmental stage or of any cognitive ability. However, it is very difficult to draw distinctions between the cognitive and moral abilities of newborn babies and those of animals. Most animals have cognitive abilities equal to or greater than those of the least cognitively developed human; thus, not applying personhood to animals is inconsistent. This brings us back to moral vegetar-



Courtesy of Natalie Horburg

ianism. No one would say that it is proper to eat other humans, but why draw arbitrary distinctions between eating humans

and eating other animal species if there is no substantive difference between humans and other animals?