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# The Hook

May 2022



# ADDRESSING YOU!

Hello May!

What a great month. Partially because the semester is almost over. Partially because it is packed with great events and joyful camaraderie. The smoke is not that attractive, though. So is bidding farewell to the Class of 2022. So there are ups and downs. As always...

Enjoy our last issue of the school year. There is some great stuff for you to frown at and/or then agree with.

We dedicate this issue to the future and to our stellar seniors. Thank you for reminding everyone about temporality, persistence, the value of listening and to think outside the box. An extra big thank you to those who contributed to the revival of the *Moon* and submitted some great articles for publication.

We hope that next year will bring us even more content and food for thought.

With Appreciation and a Bow,  
Kasparas Adomaitis and Bridget Lynch

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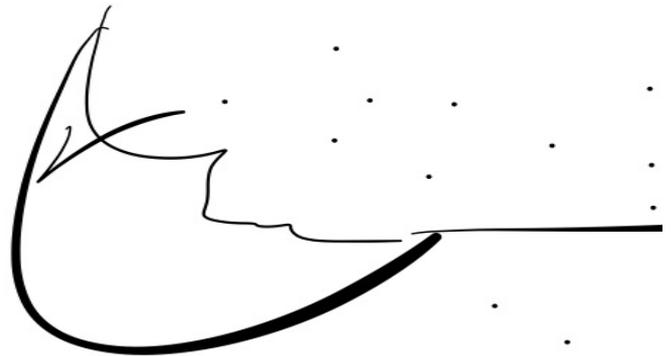
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## NEWS & HAPPENINGS

### SMALL THEFT CASES ON CAMPUS: ADMINISTRATION CONFIRMS UNUSUAL RISE

Students on campus are facing an unusual increase in the number of belongings being stolen around the Upper and Lower Dorms, and even the SAC. Word of such occurrences escalated in the last week of April after a Tutor's bike was stolen on campus property.

The rise caught the eye of the administration as an email recognizing and confirming theft cases was sent out to the campus community. The Director of Public Safety Mike Macey mentioned bikes, catalytic converters, and cash in the items that had been lost by community members. The email assured students of investigation about their belongings and speculated the involvement of individuals from outside our community.

Despite these unusual occurrences, students have been diligent in informing of misplaced belongings through using mobile apps and Switchboard.

—Shaheer Naveed ('23)

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### and those whom we owe our gratitude...

Ink and paper for being so consistent and clear about their intentions

Ramen noodles for comfort

Folks who passionately read the newspaper and respond accordingly

Wind for breaking the somewhat rare monotony during senior orals

Ice for keeping our drinks cold at this time of year

Costco for being just one hour away

And to everyone who helped to put out this issue. Thank you!

### The Moon

is the student newspaper of St. John's College-Santa Fe. We produce free, monthly publications that feature news, opinions, satire, cartoons, and other feats of student journalism. Any opinions published are held by the writer of each given article. Submissions are accepted.

**However, we reserve the right to decline to publish submissions or edit as we see fit.**

## STUDENTS 'WALKOUT' AMIDST COVID SURGE ON-CAMPUS

On the 17th of April, the Lazaretto Collective electronically distributed a petition to the campus community in which they urged the need to amend the current COVID policy. This collective is an open group of students that strive to voice the concerns of the student body in pursuit of providing a safer environment for the entire Johnnie community.

The petition included a set of demands encompassing the current state of COVID cases, which reached a maximum of 17 students in the outbreak that took place. These demands included providing better treatment for COVID positive students, reversing the mask-optional policy, and putting more power into the hands of the student body in COVID-related decisions.

With more than 60 concerned Johnnies signing the petition, a total of 21 students walked out of class the next day and protested in front of Weigle Hall to display the seriousness of the situation and their demands. Key members of the Lazaretto Collective and other students urged people to involve themselves in such matters of personal safety. They refused to entrust their well-being into the hands of certain employees of the administration.



With various slogans, banners, and chants, the walkout was concluded by students providing the petition to the directors of the school's health and safety department, the assistant dean, and the President.

As a result, the President reassured their concerns and vowed swift discourse and consequent action in the Town Hall to follow.

—*Shaheer Naveed* ('23)

## TOWN HALL: COVID RESPONSE

Christine Guevara, Walter Sterling, and Mark Roosevelt addressed the college's response to the recent COVID outbreak in a webinar-style town hall in mid-April. At the time of the meeting, 17 students had tested positive for COVID in the past several days, and staff had responded by reinstating the mask mandate and shifting the dining hall meal service to take-out only. Mark Roosevelt stated that there had been no decisions made yet as to whether these restrictions would be lifted in the near future, but that the round of mandatory testing conducted that week had seen promising results, resulting in only one COVID positive student out of the more than 300 tests received at that time.

The new mask and dining hall policies were a sudden shock to many, especially as the college had just recently transitioned to mask-optional classrooms. Several students highlighted this sudden turn around during the question period. On being asked whether he thought the lifting of the mask mandate was a mistake, Mr. Roosevelt responded that he did not know of any clear evidence that the former mask policies contributed to the case count. Most of the current cases, he said, were from a single origin, and the college's contact tracing efforts revealed little evidence of classroom based contagion.

The panel members also addressed a five point petition they received which had been signed by over 60 students. The petition addressed issues such as the flawed care of students in isolation and the greater need for student and tutor input in decision making, but also called upon staff to commit to keeping the mask mandate in place until the end of the school year and to shift all classes online. Mark Roosevelt made no such commitment, but restated that no decisions had been made on the subject of lifting the mask mandate at some future point.

At the time of writing this, the case count on campus is down to three students, and the dining hall has reopened for in-person use. Whether the mask policies will follow this trend is yet to be seen, but it is encouraging to see that the college was able to prevent spread to the extent that it has. The ability to be flexible in our policies as a small college is a virtue. Going forward, it is to be hoped that student input can continue to be an important factor in that flexibility.

—*MacKenzie Kreider* ('23)

## OPINIONS & REFLECTIONS

### EVER HEARD YOUR MOST OBNOXIOUS CLASSMATE COMPLAIN ABOUT GENDER DISCRIMINATION?

Ever heard your clearly unprepared peer blame the poor reception of her points on misogyny? Ever heard someone say her bad don rag (from a female tutor no less!) was entirely due to her gender? Ever thought about these people, “maybe it’s not sexism, maybe you’re just bad in class”? I have.

(A few disclaimers: I’m by no means saying these things never happen. Older male tutors (more so in Annapolis, in my experience) are undoubtedly frequent perpetrators of gender discrimination in the classroom, especially as regards the more attractive students. Though I don’t really want to talk about tutors; this article is about the way we interact with our classmates.

Secondly, I want to be very clear that I’m not trying to make blanket statements about all groups that experience prejudice, such as trans or non-binary students, students of color, international students, or disabled students, or any way these might intersect with and/or augment gender discrimination. These groups all have their own nuanced realities that are outside of my realm of experience and I do not intend to speak to them.)

What I am concerned about is white cis women and their (our) refusal to take themselves seriously. Many of us, myself included, are well-versed in third-wave white feminist, Tumblr-era talking points. For many of us this was our first introduction to gender politics. But, folks, haven’t we outgrown the mindset spawned from one-liners that were made to be stitched on Etsy shirts to match your pink pussy hat? Is it at all possible that we’ve become so attached to this rhetoric that we find it more comfortable to cry “patriarchy” than to confront our peers on an interpersonal level? We have got to move past the habit of using knee-jerk reactions as a shield against intellectual scrutiny!

I genuinely wonder: why do you want this to be true? Why is it preferable, even affirming, to think every one of your peers is in league with some huge misogynist agenda? Why would you wish for such a stark reality of gender inequality at your private liberal arts college? I call bad faith!

By assuming you are surrounded by agents of oppression, you undermine, cheapen, and limit your own education, and by proxy do the same to others. I urge you to free your mind, per the college’s imperative. I truly think it is *better for you* to approach uncomfortable, even hurtful, conflicts in the classroom as a person and a student first and foremost. Letting go of the victim mindset certainly makes navigating such interactions a

little harder; of course it does, because it makes them personal. But I want to believe that we (as students, as people, as a culture) have progressed enough to think of one another as individuals with flaws, and ourselves the same way.

If someone is rude or dismissive of your point, there are a few possible causes I can imagine besides blatant discrimination. For one, they may simply be a rude and dismissive person. You can respond in turn, or try to address the issue in or out of class. This is a small community; I really think you might find it liberating to take control of your narrative and get comfortable with one-on-one confrontation.

If you feel you are not taken seriously again and again, in every class, examine your own behavior. (I know this is a tough pill to swallow.) Some questions to ask yourself: does this happen to other female students? Do other students see me as a victim in this interaction in the same way I do? Do I have a firm grasp on classroom etiquette that aligns with others’ ideas of it? Am I willing and able to ask my peers for feedback on my conduct and receive it objectively? Do I value interpersonal conflict resolution more than my status as an Oppressed Woman?

It’s worth considering why you might be so attached to thinking of your womanhood in this way. We have bigger problems at hand, both in campus culture and in the world. Surely one can imagine how this mindset is tied to all the failings and shortcomings of white feminism we should have grown wary of since its rise (think white woman tears, trans-exclusionary Pussy Grabs Back slogans, etc.) At best, you are discrediting and limiting yourself. But at worst, your refusal to let go of your victim card can make you selfish and unwilling to take accountability in real-life situations.

White women are not untouchable, and at this point, in this setting, we have got to accept that we really don’t have it that bad. If you feel threatened by this take, consider your own fragility and its implications. And if you truly feel your voice is underrepresented, go to Sarah Lawrence or something, I don’t know. Have the self-respect to own your behavior—it will make you a better and smarter student and person.

Lastly, I want to say: if Seminar at St. John’s College in 2022 is truly the most sexist environment you have ever been in, I am genuinely very happy for you and I hope that never changes.

—Ruby Miller (‘23)



## EQUITY & HISTORY

Hey, you.

Yeah. You.

Did you know that St. John's College traces its legacy back to the 1696 founding of the all-boys King William's School in Annapolis, Maryland, on a property which was located at the heart of the Northern States' Slave Economy? Did you know that the "Old Program" was chartered in 1784 by the State of Maryland and that SJC didn't emerge as a private institution until 1920, 16 years before the college lost its accreditation and 17 years before it got rechartered as the "New Program" by Scott Buchanan and Stringfellow Bar?

Recently, our college's Presidents and Deans sent out an email to share the work which the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force has been accomplishing. They quoted key individuals in the college's history who were essential in the founding and perseverance of the New Program. But why is there no mention of our history prior to 1937?

In his supplement to the 1937 College Catalog, Scott Buchanan, the newly appointed Dean of the rechartered St. John's, began by quoting the charter of the Old Program which states that "the liberal education of youth in the principles of virtue, knowledge and useful literature are of the highest benefit to society, in order to train up and perpetuate a succession of able and honest men...". This, he says, is the true elegance and manner of the intention behind both the "Old Program" and King William's School. But he goes on to say that those involved in the "New Program" have a looser style and are more uncertain in their manner. So,

In order to state our purpose we start with words from a writer, a scientific writer, of the nineteenth century: Education is the adaptation of the human animal to his environment. We note the play of the child and the restless activity of the adolescent in order to discern the thread that we wish to follow on to the end. Somewhere along this thread we must pass from the merely physical aspects of the environment to the living aspects, and finally to those things that minister to intellect and spirit. In the process of adaptation play and activity must make their contribution to work and thought. Human animals must feed themselves, sense the world they live in, and move about; in these things they are like other animals. But they must also imagine, speculate, and practise the arts. These involve man, the rational animal.

By beginning with a description of Education as the adaptation of the human to its environment, Buchanan makes clear that the nature of the New Program is evolutionary. That the physical and living, as well as the intellectual and spiritual, must necessarily include play and activity in order for us to become truly rational animals. I ask, what and where are the play and activity in the current form of SJC that Buchanan mentions here? When I think of life at St. John's, I think of

the great outdoors, the academic stress, parties/socials in Uppers, Lower, the Suites and Apartments, and the seedy wannabe dive bars scattered around New Mexico's state capital. Further, outside of the SAC and some Student Life Events, where is the playful activity that was chartered into the fabric of our institution? Do we feel that the current educational setting truly embodies what Buchanan described? And furthermore, if the adaptation of life is what makes us Johnnies, is the college's current agenda in line with the able-minded honesty which both charterings of the college call upon?

It is important to consider why the core of our education here is concerned with adaptability through honest engagement. To clarify this, Buchanan continues to describe the New Program's aim by saying,

We in this country have of necessity been concerned chiefly with our competence and adaptation in the useful arts, and in this we do not necessarily go astray. It is by taking the useful arts seriously that we discover the liberal arts. In the pursuit of our vital ends we find that imagination, scientific reason, speculation, and observation play an indispensable part, but we also increasingly realize these are special activities with special ends that must be pursued for their own sakes if our more immediate ends are to be gained. There must be appreciation, understanding, and knowledge of the truth even for the sake of our everyday needs. Crucial events in the twentieth century make it unnecessary to argue this point.

The end of the New Program's education is then about a communal mindset which enables a special kind of practicality, the practicality of the truth. And that through this honest idealism promoted by the liberal arts our immediate and vital ends will be realized. The liberal arts are what he describes as,

the arts of the freeman who sets his own immediate ends in the light of the more general good. It is only by the practice of the liberal arts that the human animal becomes a free man. It is only by discipline in these arts that spiritual, moral, and civil liberties can be achieved and preserved. It is in such obvious propositions as these that the founding fathers of 1784 and 1789 gave reasons for the institutions that they set up. It is embarrassing to admit that they are not always familiar and obvious to us.

It will be an important part of the instruction at St. John's College to keep this part of our past alive in the minds of the students, but it is even more important that we implement the ends which the propositions celebrate and seek the virtues which they dictate. Ultimately the ends of liberal education are the intellectual virtues, the development of the capacities from which they come, and the integration of the characters to which they contribute.

Putting aside some of the cultural connotations for now, Buchanan's emphasis is on the integrity of preserving the spiritual, moral, and civil freedoms which SJC's tradition is founded upon. And while it is important for us to know that the legacy of the New Program is being preserved in the current Freeing Minds slogan, the college leadership by merely nodding to the

fountainhead of our rich past is also deprioritizing the majority of our 300-year legacy. We were tasked by our founders to preserve, celebrate, seek, and ultimately adapt to the pursuit of truth for the good of our society.

It isn't my goal to accuse our leadership of anything though. My goal here is to simply raise awareness for one of the many ways the college wishes to stay true to its values, but many times is unable to do so due mostly to "financial priorities". Along with the Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion, the college also created the History Task Force. It got a small blurb in the leadership's recent announcement, so you may or may not recognize the name. I served as Santa Fe's student representative on the Steering Committee for this task force for the past two school years where we spent our time pouring into the college's history pre-New Program and developing ways to publicly treat our history with an unbiased eye while maintaining the integrity of our charters. One obvious and already public finding is because St. John's does claim its legacy of being one of the first colleges in the United States, specifically from a liberal arts tradition, it is of course full of characters which both promoted and advanced, subverted and stopped the erasure of marginalized ethnic groups in early American/Western Civilization's history. The stories we found are astounding and sobering. So why haven't you heard these stories or been made aware of the college's deeper history? The college has determined that the costs to fund the research to do the history are too high for the institution's budget, and since the Capital Campaign is still ongoing the History Task Force cannot do any fundraising to pay for the research needed for the college to make public their full history.

The reason I bring this to your attention is twofold. First, I want to address the naming of SJC's first task force. Most other colleges who have started looking into their history with slavery created similar task forces, but most of them include Equity as part of their aim. The Oxford Dictionary defines Diversity as the state of being diverse [lol] or having variety, and its root means to turn aside; inclusion, whose root means to shut in, is defined as an action to include a person or thing within a larger structure. Thus, the concern of our college's task force focuses upon identifying and incorporating a variety of ethnic groups throughout the various levels of its institutional structure. But I believe this is a short-sighted approach. The college's task force webpage states that the two task forces were formed "to ensure the college reaches its community and educational ideals through intentionally preventing racial bias and discrimination." But is this at all possible without the ideal of equity? This brings me to my second point. Oxford defines equity as the quality of being fair and impartial, its root means equal. Why would our college not find equity important if what they are concerned with is putting an end to the marginalization of minority groups? In 2016 the University of Virginia, inspired by the efforts at Brown, Emory, and William & Mary, created the Universities Studying Slavery, a multi-institutional collaboration as part of an effort to

facilitate...participating institutions to work together as they address both historical and contemporary issues dealing with race and inequality in higher education and in university communities as well as the complicated legacies of slavery in modern American society.

Sadly, after reviewing the application, the History Task Force decided not to join the consortium, instead choosing to be an "observer" since they would more than likely not be publishing their findings. Together with the exclusion of equity, this makes it appear as if the college is choosing to ignore a greater part of its history by only championing the New Program and Diversity and Inclusion.

What I want to push from here is the idea that without Equity, Diversity and Inclusion don't follow through on the promise of preventing racial bias and discrimination. Without a thorough understanding of its past, the college cannot make a true acknowledgement of the legacy it claims. At the core of Buchanan's supplement is the idea that the aims of liberal education are a civic education, and this is at the heart of what makes St. John's so great. We were founded upon a mission to ennoble society. But times have changed greatly since Buchanan's, and if we are to preserve the evolutionary means of the charters we have been founded upon, then we must adapt the equity which our diverse times call for. If we are to remain close to the essence of our principles, then we must include the entire history of our legacy and not merely the present attempt.



On a final note, I want to remind you that this isn't an accusation. It is merely my attempt to share the concerns my position on the History Task Force gave me insight into. This is merely my attempt to preserve and echo the words Scott Buchanan gave to his vision for the New Program, to ask that the college do the same, and that they take action and truly invest in the work that our multicultural age is requiring of us. As a final word of caution, Buchanan says,

The most powerful controlling factor in any human environment is tradition, and any system of education that tries to ignore or escape the tradition within which it operates is bound to fail and destroy itself. The latent dangers in traditions become actual only when they are ignored and evaded. Conscious suppression or artificial construction of a tradition leads only to cultural monstrosity. Eternal vigilance within a tradition is the price of liberty.  
—Salomon Cordova ('22)

**OCTOBER 30, 1921–FEBRUARY 18, 2022**

‘te amo, abuela’, I found myself whispering as I walked on paths in Rancho Santa Fe, CA, where my grandmother lived for as long as I knew her. Born in Paraguay, after decades in the US she was completely fluent in English, but I know in thinking she’d sometimes revert to her native Spanish. So, as I wandered among the eucalyptus and bougainvillea, I spoke to Elena Rosario Delgado Rodas Loomis in Spanish.

I imagine her responding ‘tambien te amo, Elenita’. I see her glowing smile and irrepressible liveliness, evident in everything she did. I remember trailing her around the house and garden, first as a toddler, then a young child, then an adolescent. She told me stories of growing up in Villeta amidst mango trees and tarantulas, and she told me of moving to America as a 13-year-old. I admired her gentleness and patience as I heard from both her and my dad about her five children’s many escapades.

She formed ginger snap cookie dough into balls for me to roll in cinnamon sugar, we made cottage cheese and chive sandwiches together, and we both managed to forget the chocolate while baking Wacky Cake.

My Grandma was my role model. She taught me kindness, humor, and how to be Elena.

*te amo, abuela.*  
—Elena Loomis (‘22)

**MY EXPERIENCE—AND THE TROUBLES OF—  
WORKING AS AN ACADEMIC ASSISTANT**

As an incoming Freshman, academic assistants were a nebulous group of people who possessed secret knowledge that I couldn’t ever hope to get. In those days, the only interaction you got was an awkward introduction to the Greek assistant in Language class or seeing their hours at the bottom of the Ephemera. Since then, the administration has made an effort to make the assistants more friendly to the student body and have done a relatively good job at it. I’m glad we have progressed from the time when my writing assistant threw up in the shrubs outside the coffeeshop right before talking to me about Antigone.

In years past, an assistant job was relatively cushy. I can say this now, as a former Writing assistant, that I rarely worked more than 5 hours a week and very rarely was in the coffee shop during my assigned hours. In olden days, this was expected and people didn’t seem to care. The job had very little demand for most of the semester then you were swamped with 4 bad Gorgias essays to go over in one day. This was what was expected of Writing assistants along with a weekly meeting with Ken Bauman. I’m glad to know that this tradition has not changed.

One part of my experience as an assistant that confused me was the hierarchy for academic work-study

jobs. My boss was the Writing Archon, a position which rotates between tutors every few years and takes up one of their class slots. But the Assistant Dean was the boss of my friend the Junior math assistant—why wasn’t one person in charge of all of us? In one way, it makes some sense that different assistant jobs would need a different supervisor to monitor our progress, but who did we go to if we had an issue with our boss or an issue arose that they couldn’t fix? I ignored this because nothing ever prompted me to think about it very deeply.

As a Lab assistant this year, the question came up again. If I had a problem with my tutor or class, who should I talk to? The Lab Director, you’ll say. Possibly, but he doesn’t have any power over my class nor does he really know what goes on in a classroom. Human Resources can handle complaints of harassment, but their power doesn’t extend all that far since I’m in a work-study position. Similarly, the Assistant Dean can help negotiate with my tutor, but it’s unclear how their authority overlaps with the Lab Director. While this exact circumstance is unique to Lab assistants, the problem exists for all the academic assistants on campus. Now the problem comes into focus: there is no established hierarchy for academic assistants to voice their concerns, give feedback on their bosses, or lodge complaints.

Another problem that affects in-class (Lab and Music) assistants is that our tutors are not trained supervisors, and there isn’t a consistent standard for all assistants. Of course the job description lays out the basic tasks, but tutors usually don’t have the same ideas of how much work \$11.50/hour will get them. Even among the same group of classes, the tutors have wildly different experiences with assistants and what we should be able to do. While it would be reasonable to ask a Lab assistant to set up an obscure experiment recounted in the source text, I think it’s less reasonable to expect the assistant to be fully versed in the text and be a leader in class as well. I may be biased by my desire to do as little work as possible, but I still contend that there is a problem when one assistant can get by with just 4 hours outside class per week while another must work the full 10 to make their tutor happy. Of course, this is a larger question regarding the growing desire for standards or rubrics for our grades, but this problem extends across many student workers on campus who start their jobs in search of direction and only get it when they’re reprimanded for messing up.

Like any problem at St. John’s, this one is surely in need of prolonged discussions with faculty, staff, and administration and should probably get its own subcommittee that will study the issue for a few years. I don’t have the answers to this problem, but it is clear that most assistants enjoy their job but enter into it without a clear example of what is required of them besides the vague description given to them. It would probably also help to hire staff who know what’s going on in the classroom or even just appreciate the Program, but that feels like a pipe dream.

—Jaxson Oakley (‘22)

## THE GREAT BOOKS PROGRAM IN A MODERN AGE

Education is an essential part of public life; it is shaped by society but also reshapes it. We are here at St. John's College, a place called "the most contrarian college in America" by a *New York Times* columnist. Indeed, it has a unique liberal education curriculum—the Great Books Program—compared to most other colleges, yet it certainly does not just intend to be the quirky one. What exactly is so contrarian about it? What is its role in shaping the society in terms of education?

We live in a modern society of capitalism—a fast-spinning and ever specialized, rationalized, and materialized world. Karl Marx believes it will eventually destroy itself in its ever-expanding process. Globalization and technicalization bring an abundance of material and information; the obsolete are weeded out, and the desire for novelty has become an insatiable abyss. This eventual time has not yet come; however, collapse and reformation can happen anytime in the future.

We have to reflect on our time and our future we might all need to face. I believe the Program has been a rich resource for this reflection. It puts in much effort to break off from the confines of a societal monotonic imagination and indoctrinations, against many defects in modernity; its contrarities lie within these efforts too.

To start with, for education to shape society, it has to shape individuals first. The Great Books education is one of diversity in value systems in a world of pervasive economic and technology determinism. It asks: What is a good life? What virtue should be valued the most? The answers should not be answered solely by their financial value and efficiency. Instead, the Great Books, being excellent teachers of these questions, can give us different answers beyond temporal and spatial boundaries throughout human history. A common ground of ideas is created between idealists and materialists, liberalist and realist, scientist and humanist, etc.; it forges agreements and contradictions in various fields, and we are almost led into a marketplace of perspectives. They are also credible sources of context for modern ideologies and issues, enabling us to contemplate further; contemporary ideas are certainly not given birth from nothing else but these predecessors. We are empowered to drill our imagination right through necessity and delve into a more complex human world derived from the Great Books which has been sometimes neglected in its importance of contribution to modern civilization.

An education of values does not say that there is no "correctness" anymore, which would imply that attainable truth does not exist and all values should be regarded equally. Although there is no inert "correctness" in ideas in such education, we are encouraged to reasonably challenge every piece of information we encounter. The "correctness" therefore lies in human intellect and comprehension; we are expected to develop our own agency of making judgments on these values. After all, we should pose these questions to ourselves—

what is a good life I want to live? What is the best form of society for me?

In the process of personal values interacting with fragmented great ideas in the Books, we practice stretching our imagination out of our own niche and forming new habits of the mind. As Leo Strauss regards liberal education to be "a training in the highest form of modesty" and "boldness" under the "constant intercourse with the greatest minds", he believes that it "demands from us the complete break with the noise, the rush, the thoughtlessness, the cheapness of the Vanity Fair of the intellectuals as well as of their enemies". The Program should help us re-examine our noble beliefs as well as the wretched ones, and we need both "modesty" and "boldness" to confront ourselves in the same way as we could use them to confront a greater complexity of the external world.

By all means, challenges arise from the Program as well. Peter Marber considers St. John's in his article as a "bubble" that "encourages a four-year respite from the pressures and distractions of the outside world". This deliberately isolated intellectual environment being described might not help our minds to grow out of the indoctrinations in society if we avoid encountering them. Besides, in Robert Hutchins' essay *Modern Times*, he believes that "least of all can they understand their social and economic and political context until they have had some experience as wage earners and citizens" and the classroom experience is merely the imitation of actual experiences in life, which "lead the pupil to think understands something when he does not". In the realm of true understanding, the importance of practical knowledge should be taken into account. We might need to be more aware of this "bubble" and stay alert for an illusion of objectiveness and omniscience.

As Prof. Montás mentioned in his lecture on the Great Books Program at the college last month, the Program can be a boot camp for the re-proportioning of the soul—to have modesty and boldness, for instance—and in this case, the St. John's bubble can be the best incubator of such training. The Program has also granted us a gift of leisure to contemplate "useless" things and to roam amid the beauty of the great minds. More importantly, it is a program of stretching human imagination beyond the defined necessities and the fickle immediacy in a modern age.

Nonetheless, in conclusion, the contrariety of the Program alone might only lie in its potentiality, whereas to actualize it and for it to reshape the society someday, we, Johnnies, have to put in the work. An imagination built upon the predecessors is also only a foot-stone for answering important questions in innovative ways and being able to confront these complex crises in the modern age. And in the end, what a St. John's education can achieve should be under constant examination and open discussion, and we shall carry on this conversation between us, the world, and the Great Books.

—Elaine Xu ('25)



# WHICH PROGRAM RELATIONSHIP DOES YOURS RESEMBLE?

FROM  
MADDIE  
ADAMS

JOHNNIE RELATIONSHIPS ARE UNIQUE IN THE WORST WAY, BUT WE TEND TO SEE SOME OF THESE QUIRKS REFLECTED IN OUR FAVORITE PROGRAM COUPLES. WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

*start*

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU SEE YOUR PARTNER?**

- A) ON PURPOSE? UH...
- B) PRETTY OFTEN
- C) EVERY DAY!
- D) MARRIAGE DORM

**DO YOU FIGHT?**

- A) PROBABLY EVERY DAY
- B) WE ARGUE OCCASIONALLY
- C) WE TRY NOT TO...
- D) I JUST AGREE WITH THEM

**DO YOU GO ON DATES? YOU KNOW, OFF-CAMPUS?**

- A) NOT REALLY, BUT WE SMOKE TOGETHER
- B) WE WENT ON ONE ONCE
- C) YEAH, IT'S NICE TO GET AWAY
- D) EVERY MINUTE TOGETHER IS A DATE

**HOW DID YOU GET TOGETHER?**

- A) ON A WHIM
- B) FRIENDS TOLD US TO
- C) WE CONNECTED
- D) I WAS BORED OF MY EX

**ARE YOU SECRETLY PINING FOR SOMEONE ELSE?**

- A) THERE'S SOMEONE IN MY CORE...
- B) IF THE RIGHT PERSON COMES ALONG...
- C) NAH
- D) WHEN I GET BORED OF MY CURRENT PARTNER, I WILL

**DO YOU KNOW THEIR FAVORITE COLOR?**

- A) YELLOW?
- B) WHEN THEY REMIND ME
- C) YEAH, OBVIOUSLY
- D) THE COLOR OF MY EYES :)

**DO YOU REFERENCE THEM IN CLASS?**

- A) PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WE'RE DATING
- B) NO, THAT'S KIND OF WEIRD...
- C) SOMETIMES, NOT BY NAME
- D) YES! MY CORE HATES IT

**WOULD YOU HAVE GOTTEN TOGETHER OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL?**

- A) NO
- B) UNSURE
- C) WHY NOT?
- D) DEPENDS ON PROXIMITY

**DO YOU EVER SEE OTHER PEOPLE WITHOUT THEM?**

- A) YES, OF COURSE
- B) SPACE IS GOOD!
- C) WE TRY TO...
- D) ONLY IF THEY'RE BUSY

**HOW LONG DO YOU WAIT BETWEEN RELATIONSHIPS?**

- A) I DON'T DATE OFTEN, SO...
- B) UNTIL IT FEELS RIGHT AGAIN
- C) A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS MAYBE
- D) I DON'T DUMP ANYONE UNTIL I HAVE A BACKUP PARTNER WAITING

**DO YOU WISH YOU WERE SINGLE RIGHT NOW?**

- A) I MISS IT, YEAH
- B) MAYBE SOMETIMES
- C) I'M HAPPY THIS WAY!
- D) I CAN'T BE ALONE

**MOSTLY A'S...**

## *Alceste & Célimène*

"LE MISANTHROPE" BY MOLIÈRE

You're both so fun as individuals, but miserable to be around when you're in the same room; or, at least, you have been since you started dating last month. You just wanted to try dating in college, but dating at St. John's feels like being on Love Island. You hate them, but you're too proud to give up. Don't get your hopes up, they won't follow you into social exile.



**MOSTLY B'S...**

## *Wordsworth & Nature*

"TWO-PART PRELUDE OF 1799" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Existing around each other just feels so... natural. Change isn't terrifying when you aren't worried about impressing someone all the time. You know that life moves on, whether we would like it to or not, and your attitude reflects that. That's great. Enjoy your time together, let time and effort dictate what happens. Go on a hike this weekend.



**MOSTLY C'S...**

## *Orlando & Rosalind*

"AS YOU LIKE IT" BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Do couples like this even exist at this school? Can anybody have a truly pleasant relationship in this environment? Okay, okay. You're insufferable, but in a nice way, a way that reminds your classmates of reading Symposium in freshman seminar. It's cute, really. It's fine. Go write a poem about your partner, print it, and post it all over Peterson.



**MOSTLY D'S...**

## *Medea & Jason*

"MEDEA" BY EURIPIDES

For the love of god, please go be single for a while. Okay, seriously: if you have to be near each other at all times for this relationship to work, it's just a fragile codependency. If you're afraid to disagree with them, that's a red flag. If your partner comes to you one day and says they're leaving you for the princess of Korinth, don't bother being surprised.



You will be happy,  
Seize the moment, little friends,  
Your time has arrived.

*Haiku for Aries*

Hurray it is May!  
Your future is very bright,  
Stars shine down on you.

*Haiku for Gemini*

Touch your toes and stretch,  
Run around and giggle, friend,  
In the green grass fields.

*Haiku for Leo*

Go fish in the pond,  
Use worms and bugs as your bait,  
Catch a big one, please.

*Haiku for Libra*

Your soulmate is near,  
You must open your heart, friend,  
Or don't. No problem.

*Haiku for Sagittarius*

Do the reading now,  
You only have a few left,  
Before summer is here.

*Haiku for Aquarius*

Uh-oh, May is here,  
Do you know what that means, Bulls?  
Nothing but crying.

*Haiku for Taurus*

Listen to music,  
And ignore your surroundings.  
They will do the same.

*Haiku for Cancer*

The stars are silent,  
This month will be quite mundane,  
Do not expect much.

*Haiku for Virgo*

Summer is now near,  
The sun is shining on you,  
Please wear sunscreen, friend

*Haiku for Scorpio*

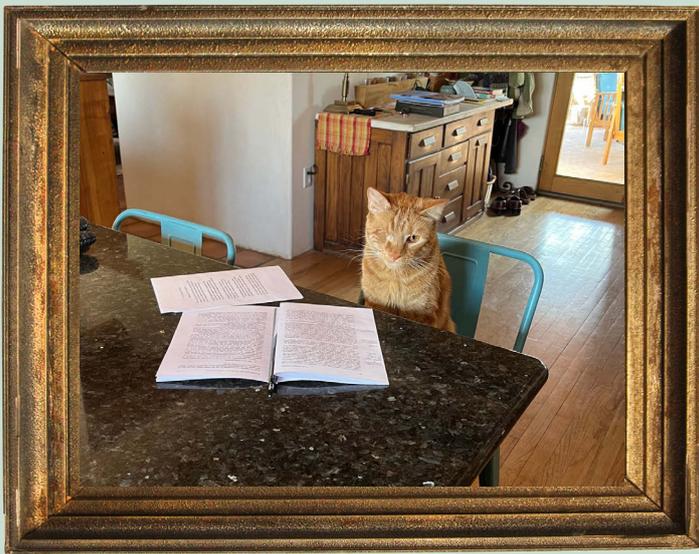
Listen to your friends,  
They have good advice for you,  
But are they evil?

*Haiku for Capricorn*

No haiku for you.  
Think long and hard about that

*No Haiku for Pisces*

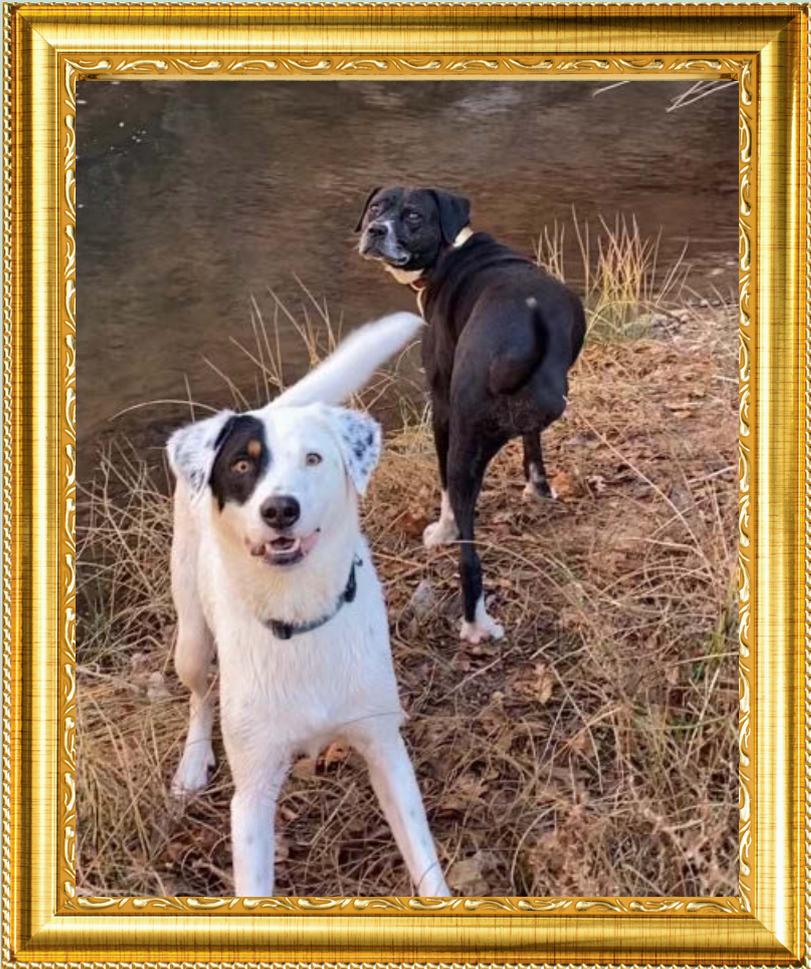
# HOROSCOPES



Angus



Phineas



Chance and Beebop



Alaska



Buster

HOMAGE TO OUR FURRY FRIENDS



Lucy



Tom



Zissou