

# THE CAVALIER DAILY

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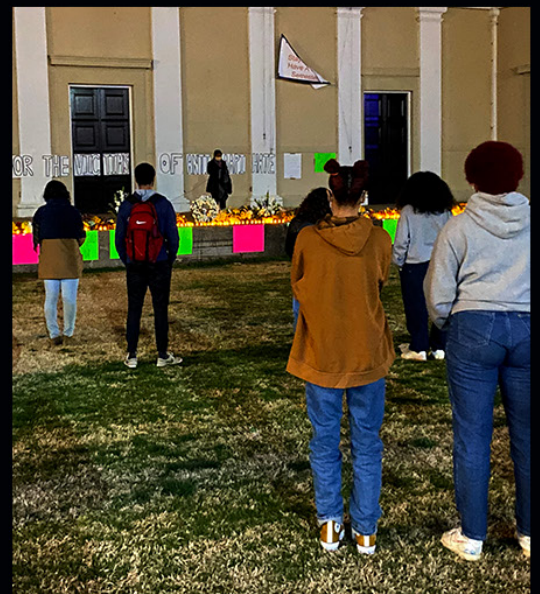
EMMA KLEIN & ARIANA GUERANMAYEH | THE CAVALIER DAILY



## MOURNING THOSE LOST

COMMUNITY HONORS LIVES TAKEN  
BY ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE

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# Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

To our readers,

The Cavalier Daily is committed to serving as a platform for historically marginalized voices and stories in the University and Charlottesville communities. We hope to be a space that amplifies the power and progress made possible by care and community.

Last week's attack in Atlanta was the latest example of unchecked oppressive violence in America. It is evidence of anti-Asian sentiment enabled by our nation's history of inequity and a year of harmful, xenophobic rhetoric spewed during a

pandemic that continues to disproportionately impact people of color in America.

This week's cover features a moving response to unfathomable violence. Students, faculty and community members gathered Saturday night, called to resist white supremacy by their collective grief for the eight victims of the Atlanta-area shootings — Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim and Yong Ae Yue.

Attendees brought flowers, lit candles and wrote messages

of support while listening to the lines of "Adamant" by Chinese American poet Arthur Sze.

"Though death might not come like a curare- / dipped dart blown out of a tube or slam / at you like surf breaking over black lava rock," read a speaker at Saturday night's vigil. "It will come — it will come — and it unites us — / brother, sister, boxer, spinner — in this pact, / while you inscribe a letter with trembling hand."

We are united by loss, the reader emphasized, but lives taken by injustice are gone too soon.

For those who were unable to

experience this display of mournful outrage in person, we urge you to listen to and uplift the responses of Asian and Pacific Islander individuals and organizations on Grounds. Read Professor Sylvia Chong's open letter in solidarity with victims of violence against Asian Americans and the Asian Student Union's joint statement — these are brave messages of compassion and love in the face of glaring tragedy. Support efforts at the University for a comprehensive Asian American Studies curriculum, so that we may learn and grow in our capacity to care for one another.

We at The Cavalier Daily strive to support a diverse and inclusive community among our staff and across our coverage. We stand in solidarity with those calling for systemic change at both the local and national level. If you would like to share your ideas, stories or feedback, we would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,



Jenn Brice  
editor@cavalierdaily.com

## NEWS

### This week in-brief

CD News Staff

### Asian student leaders, U.Va. community respond to increase in anti-Asian violence nationwide

In a joint statement released March 18, the Asian Student Union, Asians Revolutionizing Together, Asian Leaders Council, Asian Pacific American Leadership Training Institute and Women's Asian American Leadership Initiative responded to the murders of six Asian women by a white gunman in the Atlanta area March 16.

The student groups directly attributed the murders to the "anti-Asian stance that is so deeply embedded in white supremacist frameworks and ideals," citing that both the past and current presidential administration have become increasingly hostile towards China through both military expansion and inflammatory rhetoric.

"Violence towards Asians and Asian Americans in this present moment can, in no way, be separated from the long histories of U.S. militarism, imperialism and racial capitalism," the joint statement said. "Anti-Asian violence is a core tenet of the American settler colonial project, and it is under these conditions that white supremacy thrives."

Members of the University community also expressed solidarity with victims of anti-Asian violence and outrage at the spike of this violence in the U.S. in an open letter to University administration. In the letter, which contains nearly 1,500 signatures, community members encouraged the University to invest in more anti-racist education, proactively address the sources of white supremacy and protect those targeted by violence.

Kevin McDonald — vice president for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Partnerships — along with Emily Springston — associate vice president for Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights — and Dean of Students Allen Groves sent an email to students March 18, mourning the lives taken in Atlanta and stating that the University stands in "firm solidarity" with the Asian and Asian Pacific Islander Desi American populations, "who have experienced acts of racism, xenophobia and related harassment since the COVID pandemic first began." The email expressed that the community must work to promote inclusion and denounce violence.

Second Year Council also sent an email to students March 18 condemning violence against the APIDA community. The council called the Atlanta shooting "a hate crime fueled by xenophobia and racist hypersexualization" and reflected upon the long history of discrimination against the APIDA community, with hate crimes increasing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The American culture of white supremacy perpetuates racist and xenophobic sentiment through rhetoric such as the 'Chinese' virus and the mythology of the 'model-minority,'" the statement said. "Several APIDA students at U.Va. and their families have felt the impact of this fearful environment. We ask that you reach out to your APIDA friends and fellow students in this difficult time to offer support."

Additional statements have been made by other student bodies on Grounds, including Third Year Council.

### Student elections see record turnout, Liu wins 80% of vote in presidential race

The University Board of Elections announced results of the 2021 election Friday night. Third-year College student Abel Liu was elected Student Council president with 81.2 percent of the presidential election vote. His opponent, third-year College student Gavin Oxley, garnered 1,778 votes, or 18.8 percent of votes cast.

Liu will serve as the University's first Chinese American Student Council president as well as the first openly transgender student government president who was "out" at the time of his election at a major American university. Taylor Maloney, student government president at Virginia Commonwealth University, was the first-ever transgender SGA president.

The rest of Liu's ticket was elected in unopposed races — second-year College student Ryan Cieslukowski will serve as vice president for organizations, and third-year College student Cecilia Cain will serve as vice president for administration.

In a statement released shortly after results were announced, Liu's ticket thanked the University community for supporting them and securing a "moral victory on a referendum about who we hope to become as a University."

Oxley's campaign and some supporters are currently under investigation for potential violations, including spreading misinformation about Liu's platform and campaigning before the period was allowed to begin. Despite the controversy, Liu, Cain and Cieslukowski said that they were "especially heartened" by the University community's support.

"The last week has been exhausting and, at times, traumatizing," the statement said. "But the real work has just begun."

41.6 percent of students voted — an increase of over 20 percentage points from last year's rate of 10.03 percent. Additionally, 25.4 percent of students voted on this year's proposed referenda, a substantial increase compared to the previous yearly average of 8 percent.

Spencer Whitney, UBE chair and fourth-year Commerce student, called the voting rates a "huge step in the right direction for student self-governance at U.Va."

"I'd attribute this high turnout to several things, and the UBE cannot take credit for all it. We had a record number of candidates this year, this is an election year in America, and arguably I'd say that everyone being indoors on their computers and social media has helped our turnout," Whitney said.

### U.Va. increases outdoor gathering limit to 25, keeps indoor limit at six

The University increased its outdoor gathering limit to 25 individuals following a continued decline in COVID-19 cases, according to an email from Dean of Students Allen Groves Tuesday. The indoor gathering limit remains at six individuals.

Despite the relaxation of restrictions and the increased availability of vaccines, Groves warned that it is still important that students adhere to public health guidelines — including mask-wearing and social-distancing — as the vast majority of Charlottesville-Albemarle residents and University students are still waiting to be vaccinated.

"We must continue to encourage and support one another in the days ahead," Groves said. "Each of us must be personally responsible for following basic public health measures and asking those around us to do so, too."

# Community mourns lives lost to anti-Asian violence

A candlelight vigil was held in McIntire Amphitheater where attendees brought flowers and wrote messages in honor of the victims

Annabel Jones | Staff Writer

A candlelight vigil was held at McIntire Amphitheater Saturday to mourn the victims of the recent Atlanta-area shootings, six of whom were Asian women, and the lives lost as a result of the recent rise in anti-Asian hate crimes. Students, faculty and community members filled the amphitheater while respecting social distancing. Many brought flowers and candles and wrote messages in honor of the victims.

After the shootings Tuesday, members of the University community expressed outrage with the spike in violence and condemned increasing violence against Asian Americans — the Asian Student Union and other APIDA organizations released a joint statement on social media, and the University sent a statement March 18 in solidarity with Asian and APIDA students, faculty, staff and community members.

A student organizer of the event, who wished to remain anonymous, addressed the crowd, denouncing the structures of white supremacy that led to the shootings while reading the names of the eight victims — Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim and Yong Ae Yue.



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Many brought flowers and candles and wrote messages to honor victims of anti-Asian violence, including the six Asian women murdered in the Atlanta shooting on Tuesday.

The speaker recalled a statement from local activist and second-year College student Zyahna Bryant, who responded to the violence in a post that said, “Remember, the enemy is white supremacy.”

“I wonder how to make sense of our grieving and devastation,” they said. “Words fail, and so the

question remains — where do we go from here? The enemy is white supremacy in all its forms. We must rise together today and everyday to actively deconstruct systems of oppression and white supremacy. To do nothing is to be complicit in their making.”

The shootings were particularly personal for the organiz-

er because they have a younger sister who lives only 11 minutes from Gold Spa — one of the sites of the Atlanta shootings. The speaker then shared a piece by Chinese American poet Arthur Sze entitled “Adamant,” a powerful poem about acceptance and unity in the face of adversity.

Then, American Studies Professor Sylvia Chong talked to the crowd, expressing gratitude that the community could grieve collectively. The event, they said, was important to give a platform to Asian Americans who have been silenced.

“A lot of people have been saying that the death of Asians was due to the fact that we are silent,” Chong said. “But I am here to remind you that we aren’t silent, we are silenced ... We have to claim our voice, demand to be heard, not wait for a justice system or political system to decide that our lives are not expendable.”

Chong is the founder of the Asian Pacific American Studies minor and one of the authors of an open letter sent to University administration signed by nearly 1,500 members of the University community, which pushed the University to invest in more anti-racist education, proactively address the sources of white supremacy and protect those targeted by anti-Asian violence.

Two members of the Charlottesville community, Isabella and Maya Kim, felt a personal connection to the victims of the shooting and could relate to their

stories of emigration into the United States.

The Kim sisters are students at Western Albemarle High School involved in the Young Asian American and Pacific Islanders of Charlottesville organization and have been working to get their school to condemn Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes and racist incidents. While they say their work has led to some policy changes, there is still work to do.

“It means a lot to see so many people out here supporting us and being able to resonate with our stories,” Isabella Kim said.

Fourth-year Nursing student Jae Guerrant was also grateful to have an event that gave time to reflect on the hate crimes against Asian Americans in the last year. In the last year, anti-Asian hate crimes in America’s 16 largest cities have increased by 149 percent according to research conducted by The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism.

He cited anti-Asian American rhetoric around the COVID-19 pandemic as exacerbating this violence and spoke on his experience as a Black Asian American.

“This event means a lot to me because I am Black and Filipino,” Grant said. “With the tragic death of George Floyd, but also being a part-Asian clinician, it’s been very tough seeing violence on both sides and carrying about the wellness of my family. Racism lives everywhere.”



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Students, faculty and community members filled the amphitheater while respecting social distancing.

# Mazzen Shalaby reflects on his unique year on the BOV

With two months remaining in his tenure, Shalaby unpacks his experience as the only student on the University's corporate board

Amelia Delphos, Will Hetherington & Sierra Martin | Staff Writers



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The student member of the Board is a non-voting individual who acts as a liaison between students and the Board by bringing students' input to the Board.

Graduate Batten student Mazzen Shalaby will end his one-year term as student member of the Board of Visitors on May 31. He will be succeeded by third-year College student Sarita Mehta, whose term will begin June 1. During his time on the Board, Shalaby has aided the University in its response to the COVID-19 crisis, pushed for diversity and equity initiatives and advocated for a tuition freeze.

The student member of the Board is a non-voting individual who acts as a liaison between students and the Board by bringing students' input to the Board. The representative also works to give students a better understanding of how the Board and the University's administration works.

Shalaby was selected for the position in March of 2020 after completing an application and interview process. Although he did not begin his tenure until June 1, he came in with grand ideas.

His top priority was to improve the advising system for students at the University. But then, less than a week after he was selected, the University shut down due to COVID-19, forcing him to reassess his priorities as he was preparing to take office in June.

After students were sent home, Shalaby said that these priorities went "out the window" as carrying on with his initial goals "would be very out of touch."

Now, with less than three

months to go in his term, Shalaby's primary initiative is securing a tuition freeze for the 2021-2022 school year. The BOV has proposed anywhere from a 0 to 3.1 percent hike, but the future of the tuition freeze movement lies in the hands of Governor Ralph Northam. The state budget currently requires that the University raise the salaries for faculty and staff, and if the state chooses not to fund that additional expense on April 7, there will be a tuition increase in order to cover that cost. The Board will meet April 13 to determine whether or not it will raise tuition.

Tuition, according to Shalaby, should be considered the "last lever of fundraising" for the University. The BOV plans to "look under every other rock" for funding and only raise the cost of tuition if necessary, as a last resort.

That being said, Shalaby has not lost hope for a tuition freeze.

"I have not stopped beating the drum and harassing anybody who will listen to me — and several who won't — about the need to keep tuition down and to figure out what the heck we can do on that front," Shalaby said.

Reflecting on previous initiatives, Shalaby said one of the most memorable moments during his time on the Board was last September when the Board passed six recommendations laid out by the Racial Equity Task Force. The task force was appointed by

University President Jim Ryan in June to address racial equity concerns at the University and published twelve recommendations and initiatives to better address racial equity at the University.

The Board endorsed six out of the 12 recommendations, including changes to the historic landscape, the contextualization of Thomas Jefferson statue, the removal and relocation of the George Rogers Clark statue, the rededication or removal of Hume Memorial Wall, the renaming of the Curry School of Education and Human Development and the removal of Withers' name from Withers-Brown Hall.

The Board also endorsed other goals such as doubling the number of underrepresented faculty at the University by 2030; reviewing the tenure and promotion process and hiring policies to ensure equitable staff hiring, wages, retention, promotion and procurement; and recruiting a student body that reflects the racial demographics of the Commonwealth.

Several of the task force's recommendations were not adopted, such as using the University's strategic investment fund to endow equity at the University.

Shalaby said he was happy to see at least some of the proposed twelve recommendations materialize.

"My priority at that point was just take what we could get at the

time and run with it, [and] make sure we just went full tilt with what we could get and then hopefully work on it down the line," Shalaby said.

Shalaby said he has seen the University step up and help students during the pandemic and hopes some of the changes enacted this year will live on in the future — notably the option for students to opt-in to the credit/general credit/no credit grading system and increased discussions and concerns about tuition affordability.

Shalaby added he wants the Board and the administration to look at what has worked in the University's response to the pandemic — such as increased administrative support and additional online CAPS appointments — as well as what hasn't, and he wants to "build on those strengths and address those weaknesses going forward."

"If we go back to normal after this, we will have failed as an institution," Shalaby said.

One thing Shalaby thinks is lacking at the University is communication. He thinks many of the problems and friction between students and administration at the University are due to either miscommunication or a lack of communication entirely between the two.

"So many of our goals are really very closely aligned, but we spend so much of our time just

talking past each other," Shalaby said. "By the time we actually end up finally getting together on an issue, everybody is so kind of spent and aggravated to some extent that it makes it hard to go somewhere productive."

While the Board makes larger strategic decisions for the future direction of the University, Shalaby works hard to meet with student leaders and Student Council members to direct their questions and concerns to the various arms of the administration that make the day-to-day decisions.

Shalaby also interfaces with the administration, briefing them on pressing student concerns — such as financial access challenges — so that they can do their jobs more effectively. He said that he also puts certain students in contact with the administration so that they may better understand the students' perspective.

When going about his job, Shalaby emphasizes that the major priority for him is separating his personal opinions from that of the student body and notes that he is careful to delineate whether he is expressing his own opinions of those of the student body when he sends emails or speaks in meetings.

"I think of my role really as like a great facilitator of just putting people together, to some extent," Shalaby said. "I hope and think that I've done a good job with that."

# Students anticipate modified plans for Final Exercises

Given the Commonwealth's new graduation regulations, some students are optimistic about having in-person graduation events

Amanda Pallas, Elise Johnston & Margaret Glass | Staff Writers

Despite initial disappointment concerning the cancellation of Final Exercises as planned for the Class of 2021, some fourth years expressed optimism given University President Ryan's recent announcement that the University is reevaluating its plans thanks to the relaxation of statewide guidelines related to graduation ceremonies.

"Restrictions related to graduation have been substantially — indeed, dramatically — revised," Ryan said in a tweet on March 17.

Originally, graduation events would have been categorized as gatherings under state COVID-19 guidelines, which have a maximum capacity of 25 people. Now that graduation events are characterized as outdoor ceremonies, they are permitted to have up to 5,000 people or 30 percent of the venue capacity.

In a traditional year, thousands of people — including graduating students, parents, guests and faculty members — come together on the Lawn to celebrate graduating students. Normally, the students would line up by the Rotunda to walk down the Lawn, symbolizing their commencement into a world after the University. They would then sit facing away from the Rotunda, toward Old Cabell Hall, for an approximately two-hour long ceremony. There are also individual, small ceremonies held by each department to celebrate the graduating students.

Fourth-year College student Morgan Ackley noted she is happy the University has expressed its willingness to adapt the plans for graduation.

"I'm very happy to see that the University leadership has been so responsive and willing to adapt its original plans based on these new guidelines from the governor and the overwhelming negative response to their original statement," Ackley said. "I hope that the revised plan Jim Ryan releases in April will take into account all of the feedback from students, alumni and others."

Ryan first informed the Class of 2021 of the cancellation of Final Exercises on March 3. The decision was made due to limited size gatherings permitted by the Commonwealth and travel restrictions that would hinder family and friends from attending the ceremony. Instead, Ryan said the University was considering two alternative ways of holding Final Exercises — postponing an in-person ceremony to a later date or holding a modified celebration in accordance with health guidelines and

without any spectators.

Either way, Ryan said University students will be able to celebrate their accomplishments.

"I remain confident we will be able to celebrate and honor your class in a way that will be both meaningful and memorable," Ryan said.

Fourth-year College student Thomas Dale was looking forward to having his family watch him

Biden said he will direct states to make all adults ages 18 and up eligible for the vaccine by May 1. As of Wednesday, 25 percent of Virginia residents have been vaccinated with at least one dose, with an average of 50,358 doses being administered each day. Virginia is ranked 15th in vaccine distribution nationally. A total of 56,187 doses have been administered in Albemarle, while 20,223 doses have

graduating students could sign up for," Dale said. "That way you and all your friends could walk the Lawn at the same time and parents could come."

Ackley also said she thought the University's first announcement was premature considering there is so much uncertainty about vaccination, and it is possible most adults could be vaccinated by graduation.

since she grew up listening to her parents talk about how Final Exercises was such a unique and important experience.

"For me, walking the Lawn in-person is a very important part of my U.Va. experience," Ackley said. "I grew up listening to both of my parents, who graduated in '93, talk about how pivotal and monumental the experience of walking the Lawn is."

Ackley said she hopes the University will make an effort to allow some sort of safe, in-person graduation, even if it means students will have the opportunity to walk in small, socially-distanced groups with masks over the span of several days.

Around the same time last year, the University made the decision to cancel Final Exercises with the possibility of holding the ceremony at a later date. The Class of 2020's ceremony was first postponed until October 2020 then until the end of May 2021. However, given Ryan's March 3 announcement, graduation for the Class of 2020 has once again been postponed — this time until summer 2022.

Kelley Johnston, a 1987 Commerce alumnus, said walking the Lawn on graduation day is an honor every University student should experience, but understood the hardships — such as balancing stringent health guidelines while providing students with a meaningful experience — that the University faces given the ongoing crisis of COVID-19.

"It really boils down to walking down the Lawn," Johnston said. "As a parent and a former student, I am really torn. As a parent, you really want to see your child graduate but it is also hard to see that many people all in one place."

While Johnston said the presence of parents and friends adds to the graduation experience, she highlighted that ultimately, "it is all about the last time there with your friends."

"The Class of 2021 has already had one of the most unique and challenging U.Va. experiences of any class," Ackley said. "They arrived here just after the Unite the Right rally of August 2017, and now many of the most important moments of their last year have been taken from them by COVID. I think it's important that the University do everything in their power to allow for some type of safe, in-person graduation."

The University will announce its decision on Final Exercises for the Class of 2021 by April 2.



AAYUSHA KHANAL | THE CAVALIER DAILY

walk down the Lawn at the end of his final year at the University. After Ryan's first announcement about Final Exercises, Dale thought the decision was made too soon.

"Given the possibility that vaccines will be available to all adults by May, I think it's premature to make this decision about graduation now," Dale said at the time.

On March 11, President Joe

been given in Charlottesville.

When the first Final Exercises update was released, Dale added the University should consider holding an in-person, socially distanced event that would allow for the possibility of parents attending Final Exercises.

"I think another possibility would be for the University to provide various time slots for the day of Final Exercises in which

"I'm glad the University gave us an update on their thoughts for graduation so that we can begin to plan and tell our families what they can expect, but I think the degree to which they've already limited our options is a bit premature," Ackley said.

Additionally, Ackley said walking the Lawn during Final Exercises is something that is very important to her college experience,

# SPORTS

## Is Kihei's hairstyle the key to Virginia's success?

Virginia's point guard has had a plethora of hairstyles, but which one bodes best for the Cavaliers' play on the court?

Sam Liss & Brandon Brown | Sports Writers



COURTESY VIRGINIA ATHLETICS

Superstition may lead you to think that Kihei's hairstyle has an impact on his play, but statistics can somewhat back it up.

After the men's basketball team's first round exit this past Saturday, there are probably a million hypothetical situations flooding fans' minds. What if the players had not been sidelined right before the tournament? What if Virginia had shot better than 26 percent from beyond the arc? Yet, what if the most consequential hypothetical had nothing to do with scheme or shot making? What if, in some alternate universe, the Cavaliers' success depended on a mere hairstyle?

While he was a measure of consistency in previous years, in the 2021 season junior guard Kihei Clark found himself in a bit of a funk. A quick, in-your-face playmaker on some nights — on other nights it seemed that the increased responsibility proved too much to bear. In his first season with the Cavaliers, Clark was

trusted to lock down dynamic opposing point guards and sometimes distribute on offense, but as the primary ball-handler these past two seasons, the Woodland Hills, Calif. native has had to provide on both ends of the floor — showing flashes of brilliance but also moments of disappointment. Missing key shots down the stretch and shooting a mediocre three-for-10 with only nine points against Ohio, Clark rounded out his junior season in disheartening fashion.

Now with the 2021 season over, Clark's hairstyle may be the key to a more promising 2022 campaign.

Clark altered his in-game look six times this season, never playing with the same hairstyle-headband combo for longer than three consecutive games. Is there a chance this transient style could be tied to his inconsistent

play? Well, it is not without precedence.

Prior to every game of Michael Jordan's illustrious career, the "GOAT" would first put on his old North Carolina practice shorts before slipping on his NBA game shorts over them. Jordan believed these beat-up shorts were the lucky charm he needed to succeed. While Clark is not even in the same stratosphere as Jordan, there is something to be said about the impact superstition has on athletes of all skill levels. The 5-foot-9 point guard may simply be in search of a form of self-expression, but what happens when one hairstyle leads to better on-court results?

Of course, with such a limited sample size of data, it would be presumptuous to make any actual conclusions about Clark's most effective hairstyle. At the same time, when has reason stopped

sport fans from making absurd takes? For the next two minutes, we ask you to welcome the takes, indulge in some superstition and try to have some fun as we attempt to offer some explanation for Clark's up-and-down season.

### Cornrows

A widely popular hairstyle where the hair is braided very close to the scalp, Clark donned the Allen Iverson-esque cornrows only twice during the 2021 regular season. In terms of individual performances, Clark showed out in this style, dropping a season-high 19 points against both Gonzaga and Notre Dame. That said, the Cavaliers went 1-1 in these games, which makes for some ambiguity in the effectiveness of "Cornrow Kihei." For individual performances, this style bodes well for the 2022 campaign. However, the same cannot

be said for overall team performances — yet.

### Man Bun

The man bun is when the hair is pulled back and twisted into a bun at the top or back of the head. Perhaps an ode to the former Wahoo sharpshooter Kyle Guy, Clark donned the man bun seven times throughout the season, boasting a 5-2 record with this hairstyle. Yet, when it came time for March Madness, the man bun proved to be a fateful decision. The Cavaliers fell to No. 13 seed Ohio in a 62-58 nailbiter, as Clark shot an aforementioned 30 percent from the field. Unlike "Cornrow Kihei," the man bun by itself does not project well for the 2022 season.

### Natural

Clark's natural hairstyle this season was not what Virginia fans were used to, as he opted for shoulder-length locks rather than his more familiar short trim. Compared to other styles this regular season, his overall performance going natural was fairly modest, with no season-highs and only mediocre scoring and assisting numbers. On two occasions, however, Clark decided to spice it up with a man-bun-and-natural-hair combination, and the Wahoos went 2-0 with this style. In the end, the natural hair may have fostered an air of consistency. The Cavaliers went 11-3 — notably securing the ACC Regular Season Championship — when Clark donned his natural 'do.

All styles aside, there is an elephant in the room which seems to substantially increase Virginia's win percentage. When Clark wore a white headband, the Cavaliers went 11-1. Without this accessory, the Cavaliers' record drops to a measly 6-5.

With the Cavaliers looking to bounce back next season, a superstition like a lucky hairstyle may be the difference between another early tournament exit and a legitimate championship run. Upon strenuous review and hours of number-crunching, we advise Clark and his industrious hairdresser to adopt a natural-hair-man-bun-headband trio for the 2022 NCAA Championship campaign. Tony Bennett, thoughts?

# No. 8 women's lacrosse looks to dominate James Madison

After splitting the double-header against Duke, Virginia looks to sustain momentum against an in-state foe

Kushal Patel | Associate Writer

Opening play with a 7-2 overall record and 3-2 in the ACC, Virginia has started its 2021 campaign about as well as it could have asked. Sitting as the number eight team in the country, the Cavaliers have displayed variety on both offense and defense, with emerging stars and veteran stalwarts establishing a team ready to make a deep postseason run.

Despite Coach Julie Myers' terrific start to the season, the Cavaliers have run into problems when they face off against top-tier teams. Their two losses were against top-10 teams, coming against ACC rivals Boston College and Duke, whom the Cavaliers defeated in a second game, and this raises questions about the team's capability to win games on a higher level. In the two losses, Virginia was outscored a combined 37-19, whereas the six victories on the season saw the Cavaliers dominate its opponents 108-60 in goal scoring. It has been a tale of two teams in the 2021 season, and if the Cavaliers want to make a run in the postseason, they must be able to hold their own against the top teams in the country.

Luckily for Virginia, a high level opponent in James Madison awaits them on the schedule. Looking to rebuild a team that won a national championship in 2018, beating this year's Dukes team is no easy task. James Madison's variety of offense has proven to be difficult to contain, scoring 83 team goals through just six games this season. They field nine players with six goals or more, and are led by the duo of sophomore attacker Kasey Knobloch and redshirt freshman attacker Isabella Peterson, who have 10 and 11 goals on the season, respectively.

Defensively, the Dukes have been stellar all season. They have allowed just 40 goals through six games, 15 of which came against a powerhouse in No. 1 North Carolina. Their defensive unit is led by senior defender Emma Johnson, who has been a Swiss army knife on that side of the field for Coach Shelley Klaes Bawcombe. Johnson has accounted for 15 ground balls to go with 11 caused turnovers against one turnover herself. She is a reliable defensive presence for redshirt junior goalkeeper Molly Dougherty, who has a 54 percent save percentage and just 6.43 goals allowed



COURTESY VIRGINIA ATHLETICS

The Cavaliers will need to put forth a strong effort to get on the board quickly and maintain momentum throughout Friday's matchup.

per game on the season.

If the Cavaliers want to break the Dukes, they will need a strong offensive effort. Fortunately for Virginia, the offensive unit represents a diverse group of goal scorers who can put balls in the net at a high clip. The Cavaliers are led by their star veteran duo, junior attacker Ashlyn McGovern and junior attacker Lillie Kloak. The pair have combined for 40 goals in just nine games, with Kloak accounting for 22 and McGovern 18.

The offensive unit does not stop with the aforementioned attack duo. Myers' squad has five other goal scorers with at least 10 goals, including three freshmen. Freshman midfielder Maggie Bostain has 10 goals, while freshman midfielder Mackenzie Hoeg has contributed 11 goals to go with eight assists. Further adding on to Virginia's depth, freshman attacker Morgan Schwab has 10 goals with seven assists. Additionally, junior

midfielder Annie Dyson has 12 goals on the year.

However, the unsung hero for the Cavaliers has been senior attacker Taylor Regan, who has the most points on the team with 26 points, comprising 14 goals and 12 assists, often dodging from behind the goal and using swift footwork to beat her defender and score.

On the other end of the field, Virginia's defense has proven to be capable of holding offenses in check. The unit is led by High Point transfer graduate student defender Meredith Chapman, who has 20 ground balls to go with 10 caused turnovers. In goal is senior goalkeeper Charlie Campbell, who has had an up and down season, allowing 15 or more goals twice, while also holding her opponents to under 10 goals four times.

Recent history suggests that the Cavaliers have the upper hand on the Dukes. Over their past seven contests,

Virginia sports a 5-2 record against their in-state rival, with both defeats suffered during James Madison's championship campaign.

A major storyline in this matchup will be how quickly the Cavaliers start offensively. This season, of the Cavaliers' 127 goals, 77 have come in the first half, while only 50 have come in the second half. While this may be attributed to Virginia jumping ahead early on and slowing the tempo down late in most games, either way the Cavaliers have not had much experience pushing the tempo late in games. The lone buck in this trend came in Virginia's last game against Duke. The Cavaliers scored just four goals in the first half, before roaring back to score 10 in the second.

Despite the team's stellar second half performance against the Blue Devils, they should not count on doing it again. Should the Cavaliers struggle to create offense in the first

half and fall behind, it will be tough to make late game runs against a stingy and seasoned James Madison defense.

Another key factor to note is that this will be just the Cavaliers' third game on the road all season. They are 1-1 away from Charlottesville and have been outscored 29-26 on the road.

If the Cavaliers want to continue their hot streak against the Dukes, they will need production from both their offensive and defensive units, as James Madison has been stellar on both sides of the ball all season.

The Cavaliers will face off against the Dukes March 26th at 5 p.m. in Harrisonburg, Va. Broadcast information is to be determined.

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## LIFE

## Sombrero's Mexican Cuisine and Café braves pandemic

Local Charlottesville restaurant will celebrate its one-year anniversary Saturday, March 27th

Charlie Teague &amp; Mario Rosales | Staff Writers

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significantly increased financial stress on small businesses — Sombrero's Mexican Cuisine and Café, a family-owned business near the Downtown Mall, was no exception. Husband-and-wife team Bernardo and Lucrecia Martinez — who both spent years working in the food service business and always hoped to have a restaurant of their own — opened the Charlottesville location of their restaurant at the start of the pandemic last year.

Sombrero's initially opened in Stanardsville, Va. in 2016, and Bernardo and Lucrecia signed the lease on the location in Charlottesville in Dec. 2019. Bernardo explained that the family decided to move the restaurant to Charlottesville due to slow business in the very small town of Stanardsville.

"We didn't know anything about Stanardsville until we started working there," Bernardo said. "[It] is a town with 520 citizens, so it is a very small spot, so after about six or eight months of being there, we knew that we weren't going anywhere."

In addition to prompting the change of location, slow business in Stanardsville also inspired the family to incorporate a food truck into their business model in addition to the restaurant. To this day, the Sombrero's food truck remains an integral component of the business — which the two Martinez children, Daniella, age 13, and Daniel, age nine, help operate in addition to the restaurant — and, according to Bernardo, helped the family during periods of financial struggle. They have been able to use the truck at events like weddings or provide food services to local breweries and earn additional revenue.

"[When] my wife and I talked about the business ... We had two options, either close the business or ask for a loan and buy a food truck," Bernardo said. "So we decided to buy the food truck ... [in] 2017. And then we started working on the food truck, and that really helped us to keep the doors open."

At its Charlottesville location, both the restaurant and food truck serve fresh home-style Mexican meals and appetizers. Lucrecia and Daniella prepare their delicious food at the restaurant, while Bernardo cooks and serves meals from their food truck. Among other dishes, the Sombrero's menu features \$10 "build your own" items — including bowls, burritos and quesadillas — as well as family meals, including \$36 fajita spreads and a \$36 taco bar. Addi-

tionally, Sombrero's also offers a 10 percent discount to students. However, despite their tasty dishes and discounts, the business still struggled to break even as a result of the pandemic.

In Sept. 2020, Bernardo received a phone call from Pelin Halici, third-year McIntire student and Enactus

members. With Enactus' help, Sombrero's was able to begin generating enough revenue to break even over this past winter break, and eventually they began to earn a profit.

Andrew Cabalu, second-year College student and member of the Enactus team that worked with Sombrero's, explained how Enactus set

attract customers so you can follow [Sombrero's] on Instagram @SombrerosCville," Halici said. "[The team] also worked to get Sombrero's on the front cover of C-BIZ magazine to gain exposure to Charlottesville natives. Having that combination of the magazine and improving social media helped bring the locals in."

including chips and guacamole or queso with each customer's order. COVID-19 safety guidelines will also be enforced since the event will be held outdoors — customers will be expected to socially distance when ordering food and wear masks.

Bernardo highlighted the importance of the anniversary event for his family and for the Sombrero's business, especially given that the pandemic prohibited them from holding an official opening event last year.

"Since we couldn't do anything during the pandemic time, we didn't have an inauguration at all, we couldn't cut the ribbon or anything," Martinez said. "What we want is for people to know and try our food because we are pretty sure that as soon as they try our product, they will come back."

In the days leading up to this anniversary event, Halici underscored the importance of supporting Sombrero's during such a difficult time, especially given the business's history. For Halici, it is not only the quality of the food that makes Sombrero's special, but also the inspiring story of the family behind it.

"It's just so inspiring that [the Martinez family] gave up everything to move to Charlottesville," Halici said. "[They started] a restaurant from scratch during the pandemic, and somehow they went from making no money at all, and now they're making a profit just within a year ... [it's] really inspiring."

Cabalu expressed similar sentiments, emphasizing the unique value that Sombrero's brings as a family business. According to Cabalu, it is more important now than ever to support small businesses, especially family businesses like Sombrero's.

"I think also just the story behind the business brings a lot of value," Cabalu said. "You know, they moved here from Mexico a couple years ago with sights of opening up a restaurant, and it's a real family behind this business. This is their source of livelihood ... So I think what makes Sombrero's really special and kind of stand out from other small businesses in Charlottesville is that it's a real family effort."

Sombrero's offers take-out and dine-in with limited seating. Their hours are Monday 11 a.m. to 3 a.m., Tuesday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. for both take-out and dine-in, and they stop taking mobile orders 30 minutes before closing time.



COURTESY MAX BENZIAN

The family-owned restaurant continues to safely provide delicious food during COVID-19.

project leader. Enactus is a McIntire-affiliated CIO that consults with small businesses for free in the Charlottesville area, such as Northshea and Pearl Island, by providing marketing resources and general assistance to meet their clients' needs. Enactus searched through a list of local minority-owned businesses given by Caroline Medina, operations coordinator for Community Investment Collaborative, an organization that assists local businesses, and reached out to the Martinez couple, along with other restaurants on the list.

Halici explained that Enactus was looking to help Sombrero's with their business and connected the Martinez family with several other Enactus

out to help the struggling business.

"We were able to get Sombrero's on the Elevate meal plan, and ever since we did that they've been seeing a lot more orders from students," Cabalu said. "It's really helped their business, so really our whole plan going into the past year with the pandemic was to transition their business online."

Halici spoke about how the team also focused on reworking Sombrero's social media by holding a photo-shoot and making their social media footprint more interactive with giveaways in an effort to increase their follower base.

"Obviously, marketing is one of the biggest things you can do to

To help support business and gain exposure in the Charlottesville community, the Enactus team suggested that Sombrero's host a one-year anniversary event to serve as a more formal opening since their initial launch coincided with the start of the pandemic and thus prevented them from holding a grand opening.

The event will take place Saturday, March 27th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For the event, the Martinez family will set up the Sombrero's food truck on the Water Street Lot next to 1st Street and behind the Jefferson Theatre.

In addition to \$1 off every meal ordered, the event will feature music, balloons, stickers and free appetizers

# Top 10 tips to avoid the awkwardness of breakout rooms

If you struggle with virtual small groups, here are some tips to get you through the session

Madison Workman | Top 10 Writer

## 1. Turn your camera on

First things first — no one wants to stare at a bunch of little black boxes. When everyone's cameras are off, the vibe of a breakout room is naturally more awkward. To make the mood of a breakout room more positive, be sure to turn your camera on. It's as simple as that. Immediately, you will make a good first impression and others will get the message that you are engaged and ready to interact with everyone. Small talk can be difficult if you aren't looking at any faces, but hopefully you'll feel more comfortable if everyone takes the initiative to turn their cameras on.



EMMA HITCHCOCK | THE CAVALIER DAILY

## 2. Acknowledge everyone's presence

Treat the conversation like you are in-person with everyone. What is the first thing you would do if you were in an actual room with the people in your breakout room? Naturally, you would probably say hello. Instead of just hopping into a breakout session and staring at your screen mindlessly, make an effort to say hello to everyone and acknowledge the presence of others before the awkward silence settles in. Not only will this kick off the conversation, it will make everyone feel more comfortable and inclined to participate knowing that their presence is acknowledged.

## 3. Ask a question — and respond

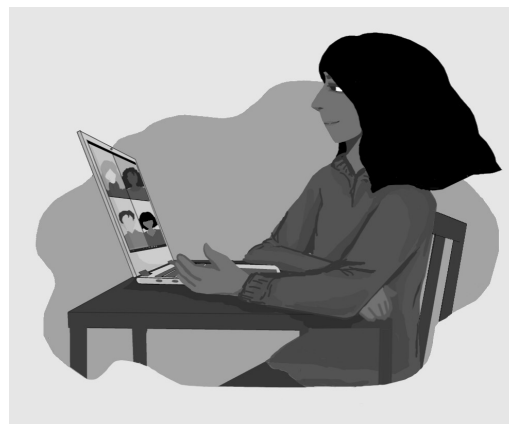
You may feel overwhelmed trying to think of a conversation starter, especially when your professor doesn't give the class any specific topics or questions to discuss together. When in doubt, just ask a question — any question. What are everyone's majors? Favorite restaurant in Charlottesville? Ask if people are considering switching to credit/no credit or keeping letter grades. Truly, anything that comes to mind, just ask. Chances are, everyone else will be thankful you said something just to avoid having to endure 10 minutes of silence. Similarly, if someone else asks a question, don't just leave them hanging. Speak up and reciprocate.

## 4. Pay attention

It's obvious when other people are on their phones, distracted by something else on their computers or simply not paying attention — and it's the worst, especially if you are making an effort to facilitate conversation and get to know everyone a little bit better. In order to make the conversation flow more comfortably, pay attention to what is going on on the Zoom screen in front of you. Even if you are deathly bored or are just itching for class to be over, remind yourself that it's only ten or so minutes of your life. Pay respect to others and make them feel as though their ideas and efforts are valued.

## 5. Check in with people

Maybe you are truly lost for words. You've had a long day, you're stressed about school or something is going on in your life, and you don't feel like having any sort of social interaction. It happens to all of us. Even though it may seem difficult at first, one thing you can do to make yourself feel better is to check in with others. We are all living through a global pandemic together and for some, it has greatly affected not only their academic lives, but their personal lives. Other people are likely experiencing similar levels of stress. Make breakout rooms a time to check in with each other and see how everyone is feeling in general. It's a great way to connect with others, and people will appreciate the thought.



SHELBY LAWTON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

## 6. Don't stare at yourself

Almost everyday, we spend hours on Zoom, logging on for lectures, clubs, meetings and even to check in with friends and family. As we spend hours doing this, we also spend more time looking at ourselves and judging our appearance on camera. You may feel completely comfortable and confident speaking with others in person, but place yourself in front of a screen and everything falls through the roof. We aren't used to watching ourselves speak. While it's tempting to look at your appearance in the little video box, try to focus on others instead of watching yourself. Not only will you feel more at ease and more able to interact with others, you won't have the opportunity to notice weird habits and develop new insecurities.

## 7. Stay unmuted

It's a simple tip, but it makes all the difference. When you enter a breakout room and immediately see a bunch of red slashes over the voice icon in each camera box, you naturally feel inclined to mute yourself too. Next time, try leaving yourself unmuted. Most likely, others will follow your lead and do the same. With everyone's audio unmuted, the conversation will more closely replicate in-person interactions, where you don't have to "unmute" yourself to speak. This will allow for smoother transitions, build a more natural speaking flow and facilitate active, open conversation.

## 8. Give visual cues

When we have conversations in person, nonverbal cues help us to effectively communicate. We are better able to comprehend what is being conveyed and are therefore more able to react and respond appropriately. Unfortunately, Zoom prohibits a lot of the nonverbal cues we use during in-person conversations, therefore adding to the stress of virtual interaction. However, we can still try our best to work in as many nonverbal cues as possible during breakout sessions. For example, try nodding your head and smiling when people are talking. This shows that you are present and acknowledging others' ideas and perspectives. Instead of slouching in bed or on a couch, practice good posture and maintain eye contact to show that you are engaged and paying attention to what others are saying.

## 9. Confront the awkwardness head-on

You aren't alone — everyone feels the awkwardness of Zoom. One simple way to combat the awkwardness that infiltrates breakout sessions is to confront it, bring it up and even laugh about it. This will help to lighten the mood and will defuse tension, so that others feel inclined to speak up. Acknowledging the awkwardness allows people to feel more comfortable with one another and not so stiff during a breakout session.

## 10. Give a formal goodbye

We all know it's awkward when the countdown timer pops up and people randomly leave the breakout room without saying goodbye or acknowledging the end of the conversation. Like you would in a normal interaction, make sure to formally say goodbye to everyone before returning to the main session. Recognize that the conversation is coming to an end by saying, "It looks like our time is almost up! It was good talking with everyone!" Instead of seeming eager to return to the main session, a verbal farewell will show that you made an effort and enjoyed talking with everyone.



SHELBY LAWTON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

# VSA's virtual Tet Show celebrates Vietnamese culture

Members demonstrate the Vietnamese nightlife culture through performances and discuss racial inequalities through podcast episodes

Nicole Freeman & Acacia McCabe | Staff Writers



COURTESY TRACY NGUYEN

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, anti-Asian racism and hate crimes have increased dramatically. Most recently, a series of shootings at spas in the Atlanta area resulted in the deaths of eight people — six of whom were Asian women. In a timely display of the true essence of Asian culture, the University's Vietnamese Student Association held its annual Tet show Tuesday through Saturday virtually to bring Vietnamese students closer to their culture and combat the xenophobic misrepresentation propagated by the pandemic.

Tet — officially celebrated Feb. 12 in 2021 — is the Vietnamese celebration of the Lunar New Year and is one of the most important holidays recognized by the country. VSA's celebration of Tet has been hosted annually since 2005 and was executed in a virtual format this year that involved two podcast episodes and either a dance, fashion show or skit being published each night. This year's show was the first

performance with a virtual format, since VSA was able to celebrate last year's event in person right before the COVID-19 lockdown hit.

VSA's 2021 show encompassed the theme of "A Night to Remember." The goal of the show was to provide the audience with a taste of what a night in Vietnam might look like to a Vietnamese American or someone growing up in Vietnam and to exemplify a journey of self-identity and growth.

"My co-chair ... [and I] chose the theme of nightlife in Vietnam because it is very important to Vietnamese adolescents to experience the nightlife," said Khoa Le, VSA culture co-chair and second-year College student. "We wanted to bring that aspect of Vietnamese culture to the Vietnamese American perspective."

The show included three choreographed dances — the girl's modern dance, the everybody modern dance and the girl's traditional fan dance. The girl's traditional fan dance stems from ancient times and has been a

longstanding tradition at celebrations — including Tet — and performances in Vietnam. VSA's dancers wore casual matching outfits for the dance and worked on performing synchronously through the fluid movements of their fans. Due to the intense

technicalities of the dance, the performers in the girl's fan dance met in person to rehearse and record while adhering to the University's COVID-19 guidelines, while the girl's modern and everybody modern dances met solely through Zoom.

"We have 10 members for the dance, so four of us, including the two choreographers, would come in one day and four of us would come in on the other," said Linh Luong, public relations chair and second-year College student. "Trying to recruit people to do



COURTESY TRACY NGUYEN & LINH LUONG

the dances and stuff was a bit hard because, for the most part, I don't know if everyone loves getting up and dancing on Zoom. But we did get a good number of people who participated."

In addition to the typical inclusion of both traditional and modern dance styles, this year's Tet Show was the first to incorporate modern outfits into the fashion show, in accordance with the nightlife theme. The fashion show included a display of modern nightlife and party outfits that represent current Vietnamese fashion trends in streetwear, including oversized bomber jackets and suits. For the traditional side of the fashion show — which occurs annually — participating members wore "áo dài," which is a traditional Vietnamese garment worn for ceremonies, school and other special events.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the culture co-chairs in organizing this year's Tet Show was garnering participation. Many students suffer Zoom fatigue after long days of online classes, so it was difficult to gain participants and create a fun, engaging environment throughout the rehearsal process. Additionally, members were unable to meet as one unified group on Grounds to watch the festivities together — a challenge VSA needed to overcome in order to continue sharing enthusiasm for Vietnamese culture.

"Recreating that unity aspect this year while trying to stay safe with social distancing guidelines — and having members that were remote and members who were in person unite [and] bridging those problems was the hardest part," Luong said. "I think we did a pretty good job this year."

Both Le and her culture co-chair, fourth-year Engineering student Kiley Weeks, were elected to their positions in March 2020 and began the Tet Show planning process the following April. One of their goals with this year's Tet Show was to take a more serious approach to the presentation of Vietnamese culture in order to provide a more accurate display of their heritage and call attention to important issues pertaining to Asian American discrimination.

"I wanted to make a difference in this org in terms of ... making this org more cultural leaning," Le said. "Most of the time our show is more playful — the themes are more lighthearted. But especially with what is going on during the pandemic — and especially with the recent events — we wanted to highlight something more informative and serious but also make it accessible and easy for people to listen to if they are hesitant to listen to such serious topics."

In shifting the intent of the

show, Le and Weeks introduced and led a podcast called "Kulture Shock." In the podcast, Le and Weeks address numerous topics affecting the Asian American community in a completely opinion-based approach.

"The podcast's purpose is to educate and advocate for the Vietnamese [and] Asian American [communities]," Le said. "We talked about important topics such as mental health, current events and our own experiences with racism and colorism in the United States. We hope that the news we provide and the thoughts that we have will allow members of our community to become more upstanding."

Some members of the VSA executive board were initially hesitant to accept the new idea of integrating a podcast into the show, particularly because the content of the podcast would reflect the entire organization and could be misinterpreted in its representation of very serious topics.

"We had to fight really hard for the podcast because it was something that was a little bit hard for people to listen to or accept the idea of because this organization is known for being very lighthearted and fun," Le said. "We put a disclaimer on all of our podcast episodes saying that these are our personal opinions and it does not necessarily reflect VSA as a whole."

The pandemic's increase in anti-Asian sentiments has made this year's Tet Show even more important in its mission to not only unite those with shared Vietnamese culture but to increase cultural awareness and appreciation among all races and ethnicities. With an almost 150 percent rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans this past year across major U.S. cities, the topic has become increasingly serious and sensitive to many people in the Asian community. Addressing these issues through race-based and cultural organizations such as VSA not only creates a safe space for the people participating, but also serves to educate the non-Asian population in surrounding communities.

"I think that people should [watch the show] in general to learn about other people," first-year College student Taylor Nguyen said. "But with the recent things in the media and the news, I think now it's a little bit more important because the people who are causing all of the discrimination are ignorant towards the Asian community. I think [this discrimination] comes down to ignorance and not learning more about other people's cultures."



COURTESY TRACY NGUYEN

The Áo Dài, a traditional Vietnamese garment worn for formal occasions, can be worn by both sexes in a variety of colors and designs to celebrate Vietnamese culture.



COURTESY KHOA LE

Ao Dai was worn in variations of blue for these three members.



COURTESY KHOA LE

Members practiced hard to put on a enjoyable virtual fan performance for the Tet Show.

# OPINION

## LEAD EDITORIAL

# College athletics exist outside of men's sports

*Women's sports deserve equal funding, equal support and equal fanfare*

The National Collegiate Athletic Association is currently facing backlash as its annual March Madness basketball tournament begins. As both the men's and women's basketball teams arrived in their tournament cities, coaches and players noticed a discrepancy between amenities offered to the men's teams versus women's teams. Unsurprisingly, the backlash was swift, as collegiate coaches and players, alongside players from the National Basketball Association and Women's National Basketball Association slammed the NCAA for its actions.

Stanford coach Ali Kershner posted on social media showing the rows upon rows of weightlifting and exercise equipment that the NCAA has offered to men's teams in Indianapolis. At the women's tournament in San Antonio, those players were given one set of dumbbells and yoga mats per team — nothing more. Although the NCAA made promises to improve conditions for women's teams, these disparities revealed a much more systemic issue — a continuous disregard

for women's sports. As just one recent example, official swag bags for men's teams contained more products and merchandise than those for women's teams, and food options for men's teams have also been more extensive. Women's teams deserve the same support from fans and resources from the NCAA as men's teams.

The University student body can also demonstrate their desire for equality between men's and women's sports teams by showing equal support to each. While it's understandable that students were excited for potentially another men's national championship, women's basketball has never received the same fanfare. The cancellation of the Atlantic Coast Conference semifinal game against Georgia Tech saw students on social media expressing their grief over UVA's elimination following positive COVID-19 tests in the team. However, the same grief was absent after the women's team cancelled the remainder of their regular season in January due to injuries and COVID-19 concerns. University students simply don't give the same support to

women's basketball — a timely example that exemplifies this gender imbalance in our own community.

It seems that Virginia basketball is synonymous with men's basketball, as the women's team rarely — if ever — gets the same publicity. This is an issue that exists on a national level, at many different colleges and Universities. At the NCAA tournaments, men's swag bags are branded as the default March Madness tournament, while all March Madness branding for the women's tournament has been explicitly gendered as a variation from the supposed default men's tournament.

Women's sports are just as important as men's. They deserve equal funding, equal access and equal support from students and administration. The coronavirus pandemic has put a financial strain on colleges and universities, and students have had to fight to ensure women's sports aren't the first programs to be eliminated. While we haven't had to fight this in Charlottesville yet, we should stay cognizant of how the University handles its own financial strains in case it has to make

more cuts to athletic programs. National organizations like the NCAA must also establish full equality between their men's and women's teams while protecting all players, regardless of gender or sex. Ultimately, the NCAA's shortcomings regarding Title IX are much more detrimental to athletes on women's teams than NCAA administrations who may potentially be punished.

While Title IX is intended to prohibit gender or sex discrimination within federally-funded sports programs, it's clear that discrimination within athletics is alive and well. The Republican Party has used women's and girl's sports as a prop for its transphobic policymaking, trying to ban transgender women from women's sports. This simultaneously exemplifies a lack of thoughtful legislation to help women's sports and a repulsive prejudice against trans athletes. Men's and women's sports already isolate people who identify outside of the gender binary. Equality between men's and women's athletics should act as a stepping stone to further gender and

sex equality.

We as students should also shift away from the men-centric focus we often place on athletics. Athletics are a jumping point for combating gender inequalities and binaries in our local communities and the nation at large. There are sports to watch outside of men's basketball. The University women's swimming and diving team just took home the NCAA championship title, but their success has been overshadowed by the men's basketball team's elimination. We must take pride in our student athletes regardless of gender or popularity. The pride that we feel for our women's swim team should not be temporary, and the pride we have in our men's basketball team should not be an exception — we must maintain that pride for every sport, team and player.

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# In defense of the general education requirements

*With hindsight, one can appreciate the benefits of having general education requirements to experience the breadth of the liberal arts*

If first-year me saw this column's title, he would disagree. However, a year after completing my last general education requirements for the College of Arts and Sciences, those classes have proven useful in my personal and academic development. Thus, I now argue the merits of keeping these requirements, especially in regard to recent calls to abolish them by columnists Bryce Wyles and Max Brester.

By far the greatest benefit of taking general education requirements is the ability to experience academic disciplines that you would not otherwise be exposed to. General education requirements push students to take classes outside of their normal areas of academic interest. For example, quantitative requirements in the New Curriculum make it nearly impossible for a student who absolutely hates math to avoid taking a class that involves at least some Calculus.

The exposure to different subject areas teaches students new ways of thinking and communicating, benefitting their development academically and professionally. By fleshing out the topical variety found in a liberal arts education, students become more adaptable, find new passions and challenge their problem-solving

acumen in an unfamiliar landscape. These long-term benefits are why many schools, including the University, have emphasized a liberal arts education as the best model to follow and why these requirements are therefore purposeful — not arbitrary.

Further, general education requirements create opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning on themes that normal departmental classes will not, including anti-racism education

as — with or without a requirement — many likely need the extra push. Given the benefits of an education with a broad scope, the University has a responsibility to use tough love to ensure students make the right decisions for themselves — even if students aren't happy about it in the short-term.

Students also face pressures to take certain classes because they think they might make for a more compet-

merely as advanced vocational training.

While critics may argue that these requirements are redundant or tedious after high school requirements, I believe this claim is misguided. It is nearly impossible to compare high school classes to those at the college level. University classes are far more intense and in-depth, often taught by experts in the field — the same cannot be said of the average high school

at best in abolishing these requirements.

Further, complaints about “academic freedom” are also misguided. The very notion of academic freedom serves to ensure students can pursue whatever discipline and interest they want — general education requirements do not infringe upon this. Rather, the requirements set constraints so students do not use excess freedom to their own detriment. Moreover, students have significant freedoms in what counts towards general education requirements — thus, student autonomy is not unfairly limited.

The College should therefore continue its general education requirements — there is real value in a liberal arts education. While the current system is not flawless, it is better than one without these requirements. As an institution committed to learning — not vocational training — the University must continue with this mission. Even with the challenges presented by the pandemic, the University should not falter on its commitment to a true liberal arts education.

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**“The exposure to different subject areas allows one to learn new ways of thinking and communicating.”**

and classes that teach students how to address pressing social and ethical dilemmas. Fortunately, the University offers these classes in the College through the Engagements, and while many first years may have frustrations about some classes, the Engagements have massive potential to form an essential liberal arts experience.

Without general education requirements, that student who hates math may continue avoiding it, sticking with familiar topics. While many students are self-motivated enough to seek classes in different subject areas

and resume. However, the truth behind this logic is limited. Studies have found that the best job outcomes correlate with which University one attends and not the classes taken, and have demonstrated that a liberal arts education has a high return on investment. In fact, many companies actively hire students on the basis of diverse educational backgrounds, valuing the liberal arts model. General education requirements ensure that all students are exposed to different disciplines and career paths, which discourages the treatment of higher education

class. Given this, I find arguments about the inequities in the availability of advanced placement credits to miss the point that students ought to take a varied curriculum regardless. General education requirements can level this divide, as they ensure no student receives an education lacking in a discipline that others may have had exposure to in high school. Of course, that is not to say that the inequities in the availability of advanced placement credits is not an issue — it is. However, these inequities would be exacerbated at worst and unaffected

# Vietnam War-era leftists needed free expression

*The New Left's commitment to free expression illuminates current left-wing debate over the First Amendment*

The recent columns by Bryce Wyles and Emma Camp show that the left at the University is divided on free speech. An offensive demonstration by the right-wing Young America's Foundation led Wyles to call on the University to “deny space to such repulsive displays.” Responding to Wyles, Camp made a liberal, Voltairean defense of the freedom of even detestable speech on Grounds. Camp characterized Wyles's column as indicative of an “authoritarian streak” among college leftists, which, she argues, makes for bad optics — making them “appear volatile, dogmatic and anything but progressive.”

I agree with Camp. However, I think that her argument — based mostly in abstractions and optics — could resonate more with a left-wing audience if illuminated by history that appeals to leftist self-interest. To that point, I encourage University leftists with qualms about free speech to look to your Vietnam-era predecessors in the New Left movement on Grounds — who opposed the censorship of unpopular speech because their speech was once unpopular. We should maintain their commitment to the First Amendment because — as University history proves — the left has skin in the game, too.

Antiwar speech has historically

consigned many leftists to the ideological minority — if not a jail cell, like Charles Schenck and Eugene Debs. The first University leftists to oppose the presence of U.S. troops in Vietnam knew this well. As Julia Bolger writes in *The Oculus*, during the mid-1960s, the University's student body “was overwhelmingly conservative” and supportive of the Vietnam War. In 1966, an anti-war student protest

in 1966 to 1967, there was also significant censorship of *The Cavalier Daily* by Dean B.F.D. Runk, who, according to then-managing editor Richard Dyas, monitored its content and exerted influence over the paper by appointing “an Editorial Consulting Board, consisting of his own hand picked students...”

Hanna describes that Runk's censorship led to a divorce between the

lating anti-war fervor on campus.”

This “escalating anti-war fervor,” which eventually manifested in teach-ins, the founding of the Charlottesville Draft Resistance and an increase in faculty allyship — an anti-war petition amassed the signatures of 300 faculty members — launched leftism into the mainstream at the University. The radical Anarchist and Progressive parties saw unprecedented successes in the

On the Alderman Library steps May 5, where 23 leftists had been pelted with snowballs four years prior, then-Student Council President James Roebuck presented demands of the Virginia Strike Committee to University President Edgar Shannon. The Committee demanded a public denouncement of the U.S. military's incursion into Cambodia, as well as a commitment to racial and gender equality and workers' right to unionize. The first demand, however, was for students' First Amendment rights to be guaranteed. Finally, on May 10, President Shannon publicly opposed the Vietnam War.

From 1966 to 1970, the New Left on Grounds evolved from a minority to a mass movement, thanks to leftist organizing made possible by First Amendment protections of free speech, press, assembly and petition. To challenge the University's commitment to freedom of expression is to forget that our once-unpopular New Left predecessors fiercely demanded it. Recalling their values and success, we need to do the same.

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**“We should maintain their commitment to the First Amendment because — as University history proves — the left has skin in the game, too.”**

organized by the leftist Students for Social Action mustered just 23 members on the steps of Alderman Library, while an antagonistic crowd of 300 hurled insults and snowballs their way. Such a development reflects the absence of a strong leftist movement on Grounds at the time.

In his master's thesis on the history of the New Left at the University, Thomas Hanna notes that the SSA was suppressed by Student Council through repeated denial of official recognition, and “as a condition for official recognition, SSA was forced to agree to” certain restrictions. From

University Press and *The Cavalier Daily*. Still, some University leftists, frustrated that existing publications “virtually ignore[d] issues” such as “the undeclared war in Vietnam,” founded the leftist *Iconoclast* in 1966 and *The Virginia Weekly* in 1967. The latter of the two, according to its founder, was “designed [to] transform the staid University of Virginia into the Berkeley of the South,” referring to Berkeley's famous Free Speech Movement of the mid-1960s. According to author Dale M. Brumfield, the *Weekly* published “headlines from the rapidly emerging New Left movement, including...esca-

1968 and 1969 Student Council elections, respectively.

Growing anti-war sentiments culminated in a ten-day period of upheaval in May 1970 referred to as “May Days,” during which, as *Virginia Magazine* describes “many classes were canceled, anti-war rallies swelled to the thousands, protesters occupied the Navy ROTC building, student marshals stood sentry against arson around the Academical Village, and billy club-wielding police stormed the Lawn and some fraternity houses, hauling dozens of fleeing students to jail.”

# HUMOR

## Long-awaited upgrades to U.Va. tours are finally here

Most students remember their first time touring the brick pathways of the University. They carry fond memories of the guide acting like they practice walking backward in their free time and the parent who asked 34 questions about transfer credit. They have chronic nightmares about that moment of sheer terror when they had to come up with an interesting fact about themselves for an icebreaker. Although aspiring students cannot experience the same joyful moments in this day and age, University tours recently received several major upgrades.

Remember when parking garages were for cars? Frankly, it made way too much sense. The people demanded something more, and the University listened. Thanks to this upgrade, you will notice a long line of tired college students drooling into

plastic tubes when you roll into the Central Grounds Garage. “If I work hard enough, I might get to do that one day,” aspiring students will think with a smile.

“On your right,” your free audio guide will announce, “you can see real students taking COVID-19 saliva tests. Did you know? A popular method among students is to imagine a pint of overpriced ice cream in front of them. The University is even considering installing hunger traps in testing locations. These elaborate buffets are filled with chocolate fountains, cotton candy machines, 14 flavors of vegan brownies, meat-free Wagyu beef — an empty plate — and an artisanal pickle station. Since the budget for a single buffet outweighs that of all dining halls combined, tuition rates are tripling next year, but we anticipate no backlash.”

Continue your tour by masking up and heading towards Newcomb Hall. Now is the perfect time to sit in on a class that matches your interests. Simply pull out a laptop and click on a \$39.99 non-refundable pirated Zoom link to a class session. Unfortunately for many visitors, the refund policy stands even if the professor forgets to click unmute during the entire lecture.

Visitors can pay an extra \$20 fee for the breakout room experience, in which they find themselves being thrown into “Breakout Room 4” without any warning. Exactly three seconds will pass before the college students in the group hesitantly greet each other. One by one, each member of the group will mute themselves again.

An enthusiastic visitor remarked, “I never knew college classes were so...tranquil,” after

ter splurging on the worthwhile breakout room experience. Visitors are strongly advised to frantically click the “Leave Meeting” button before they find themselves alone with the professor.

During your tour, the white tents are a sight not to be missed, even if you are short on time. Photos in front of the tents are a unique Instagram opportunity that will revolutionize your grid. One visitor commented “the Eiffel Tower is nothing next to these architectural feats.” If you are lucky enough to arrive in the evening, sit on the Lawn and watch their shiny plastic canopies reflect the sunset.

For the last hurrah of your unforgettable tour, order a Spring Triple Threat Cake — an unsettling combination of confetti, carrot cake and Irish potato cookies — iced with “Bite Me” from Insomnia Cookies. Yes, an

Irish potato cookie exists. Yes, you are going to eat it. No, you are not going to regret it after five seconds — it will only take one. To more accurately taste the college experience, wait patiently until two in the morning and have it delivered to your favorite curb.

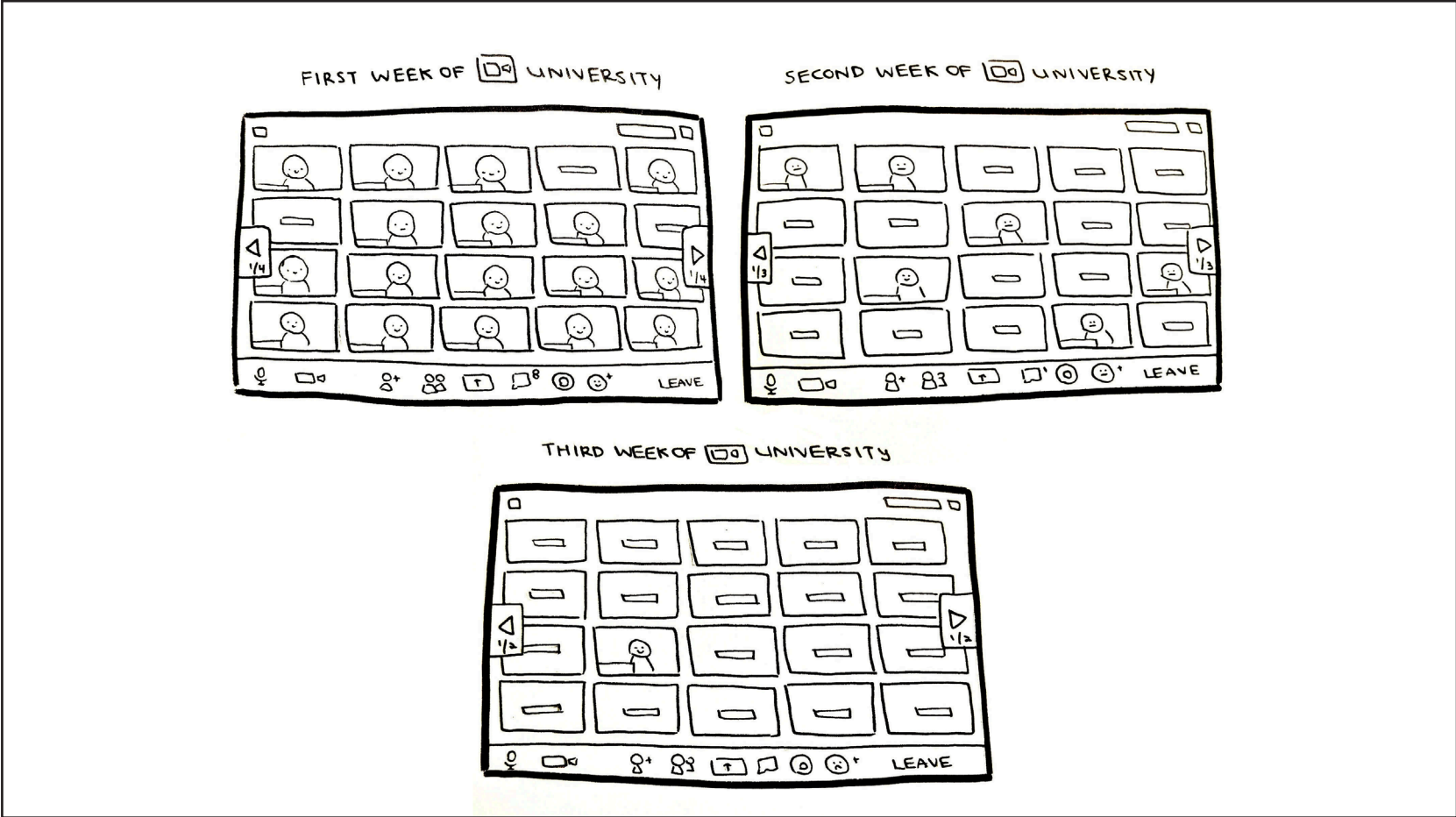
Now that you have all the tools you need to make the most of these thrilling upgrades, get out there and start touring. By the way, the University has suspended all in-person visits, but we can keep dreaming.

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# CARTOON

## (De)Evolution of Zoom University

Alannah Bell | Cartoonist



# PUZZLES

## WEEKLY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Abby Sacks | Puzzle Master

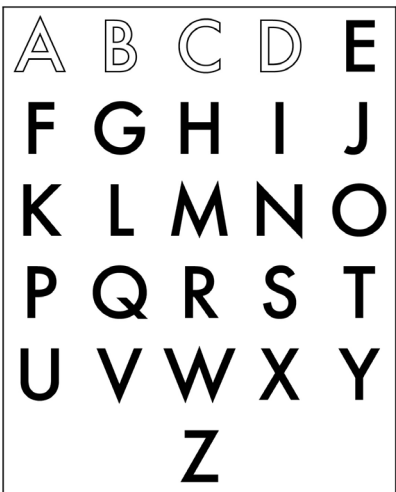
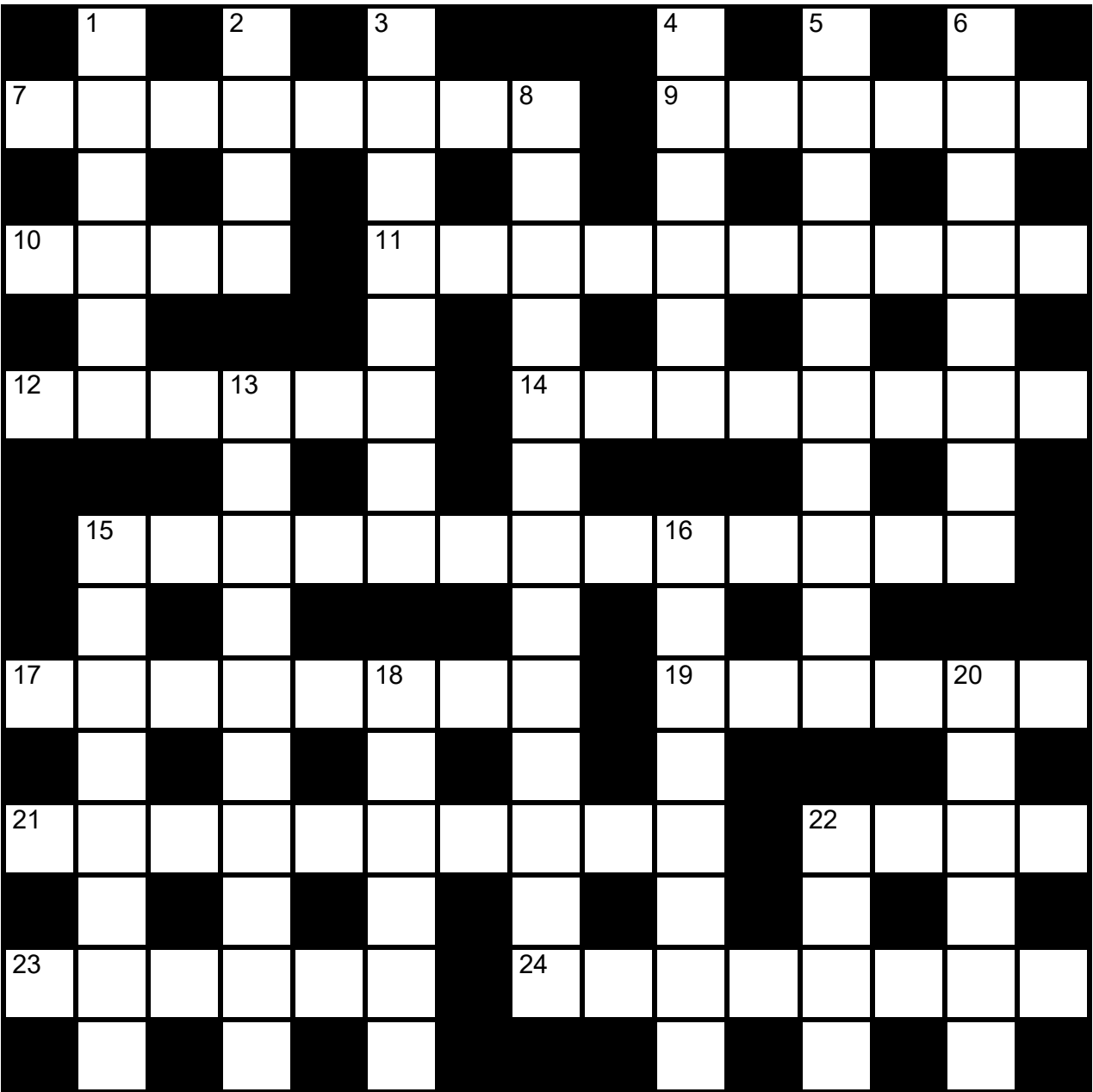
\* THE SOLUTION TO THIS PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND IN THE NEXT ISSUE

### Across

- 7. Thin, flat pasta shape.
- 9. Tall, thin rock formation; also called fairy chimney.
- 10. To say an explicit word.
- 11. To do without thought; carelessly.
- 12. What April showers bring. (singular)
- 14. Person who sells flowers.
- 15. Person who lives in and owns the same residence.
- 17. To have an immune system intolerance of something.
- 19. Light or muted shade of colors.
- 21. Item that sold out in March 2020.
- 22. Musical about students at a New York performing arts high school.
- 23. Childhood word for an unkind person.
- 24. A type of grape without seeds.

### Down

- 1. Of or relating to ceremony.
- 2. What children search for on Easter.
- 3. A person who procrastinates.
- 4. A type of dough used to make baklava.
- 5. Idiom for feeling sad. (two words)
- 6. A person who conducts campaign surveys.
- 8. Not successful or effective.
- 13. Magical world in novel by Lewis Carroll.
- 15. Observer; bystander.
- 16. Not registered or counted for a vote.
- 18. Grooves along a roof to catch rain.
- 20. To entangle into.
- 22. Alternate word for movie.



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\* SOLUTION FROM MARCH 18 ISSUE



# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Civil War historians tackle Confederate ideologies

Virginia Festival of the Book panel dives into Southern nationalism and revolutionary thought

Grace Eberhardt | Staff Writer

Historians Adrian Brettle and Ann Tucker joined William Kurtz, managing director and digital historian at the Nau Center for Civil War History at the University, to discuss the ideologies of the Confederacy Wednesday. The webinar was sponsored by the Nau Center for Civil War History as a part of the 2021 Virginia Festival of the Book, which is entirely online this year due to COVID-19 restrictions rather than at the event's usual venues around Charlottesville that typically draw around 20,000 attendees.

Proponents of the Confederate States of America relied on a distinct set of ideologies to justify the new nation's existence. For example, the concept of states' rights was instituted to defend the South's slavery-based economy. The problem is these ideologies are often discussed as if the war happened in a vacuum. According to the panelists, scholars rarely consider the impact European revolutions had on Southern political thought of the era, nor do they consider the ways in which contemporary thinkers saw the Confederacy fitting into a constantly changing economic and political world. The event sought to provide a more nuanced discussion about Confederate ideologies in a transnational context.

Tucker, a professor at the University of North Georgia, specializes in the history of the U.S. South in an international context. Her most recent book, "Newest Born of Nations," delves into the ways elite white Southerners studied European revolutionary thought to develop and justify Confederate ideologies.

Brettle, Class of 2014 alumnus and lecturer at Arizona State University, has also written numerous publications on various relevant topics, including 19th-century politics, American slavery and Confederate nationalism. Published last year, his book, "Colossal Ambitions: Confederate Planning for a Post-Civil War World," grapples with the dueling visions Confederates held for the post-war world. Brettle's thorough research into the evolving ideologies of the wartime American South reveals a myriad of competing plans for the future of the Confederacy.

Kurtz moderated the discus-



sion between Tucker and Brettle, fielding questions from attendees to pass along to the speakers. After warm introductions, each speaker briefly discussed their most recent novel. Kurtz posed questions to the speakers that honed in on the intersection of their research interests — the revolutionary ideologies of the Confederacy. The historians provided their virtual audience with fascinating interpretations of the ways in which the Confederacy influenced — and was influenced by — European revolutions.

Tucker began by explaining how mid-19th century Europe was marked by revolutions sweeping across the continent, as nations overthrew their empires to build self-governing systems. As tensions built between Northern and Southern states in the U.S., Southerners in favor of secession began appropriating the ideological arguments of European revolutionaries.

According to Tucker, many Southerners identified the Confederate cause as the ideological equivalent of nations abroad fighting to overthrow oppressive empires in favor of self-governance. European revolutionary thinkers did not, in turn, identi-

fy so strongly with Confederate ideologies because they tended to find slavery incompatible with freedom. Nevertheless, Southerners continued to make comparisons between themselves and European revolutionaries.

For example, Confederate nationalists related the attempts by Northerners to restrict the spread of slavery into the U.S. West to 18th-century attempts by Italian revolutionaries to restrict the spread of an oppressive government.

"Elite white Southerners used international perspectives in order to distinguish the South from the North, justify secession and ultimately legitimize the Confederacy," Tucker said.

Brettle added that, not only did Confederates incorporate European revolutionary thought into their ideologies, but they also interacted with the transnational world directly through slavery. They considered interdependency through business to be the best path to widespread acceptance of slavery. In fact, Confederates viewed their role to be an integral part of an evolving global economy. As world empires fell and gave way to modern states, they believed themselves

to be a uniquely free and just form of economy and government in an unfamiliar political landscape.

"There was this universal feeling from Americans' ideology [that] they were the last, best hope on Earth of democratic government for the world," Brettle said.

Tucker later added that Northerners also felt a transnational pressure to preserve the U.S. as proof that republicanism could be a successful form of government. Northerners believed a Confederate government inherently undermined America's originally intended form of government. Their secession could be construed by foreign nations as a failure of the great American experiment.

Kurtz posed questions — some of his own and some from the audience — that guided the speakers into a conversation regarding the failures of the Confederate ideology in this transnational context.

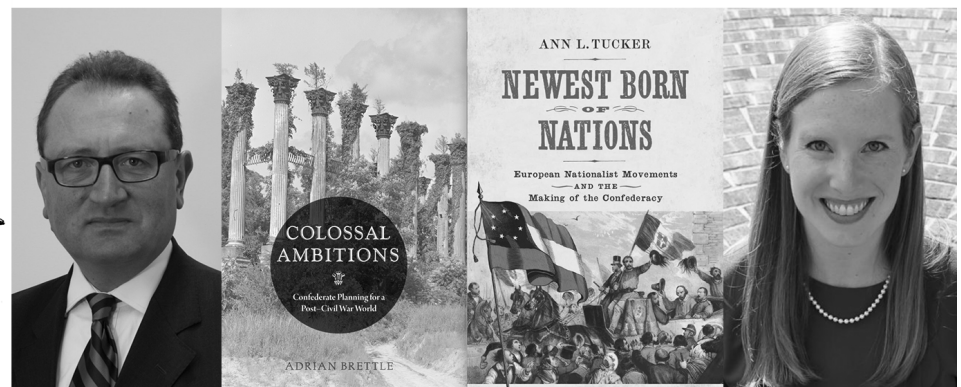
"[Confederates] were lousy propagandists for a foreign audience in the sense that they were upfront that the Confederacy was about slavery, was about expansion, that it was a great power

in its own account," Brettle said. "It was a nation among nations, but it was also seen as a vanguard of an entirely new nation. It was one about white egalitarian democracy, and it was one about racial hierarchy in an era where races were going to come more into touch with each other."

Guided by Kurtz's thoughtful questions, Tucker and Brettle provided their audience with a fascinating and unique perspective on political thought contributing to 19th-century Southern nationalism and revolutionary thought.

Tucker and Brettle's books are available for purchase online and at the UVA Bookstore. The Virginia Festival of the Book will continue through March 26, featuring various live-streamed panels of experts discussing a wide range of literary topics.

### Confederate Ambitions: Flawed Visions for a New Nation with Adrian Brettle and Ann Tucker



Sponsored by the Nau Center for Civil War History at UVA

**Virginia Festival  
of the Book**  
VIRGINIA HUMANITIES

COURTESY VIRGINIA FESTIVAL OF THE BOOK

# Writing women, writing resilience

Virtual Virginia Festival of the Book event hosts three authors with woman-led novels

Lauren Whitlock | Staff Writer

The All-Virtual 2021 Virginia Festival of the Book hosted a virtual discussion Friday about “Writing Women, Writing Resilience.” Authors Susan Abulhawa of “Against the Loveless World,” Peace Adzo Medie of “His Only Wife” and Diane Zinna of “The All-Night Sun” came together over Zoom to discuss their novels, which all feature strong female protagonists.

To begin the discussion, moderator Catalina Esguerra, the programs manager for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the UVA School of Education and Human Development, prompted the authors to read excerpts from each of their books.

Medie began by introducing her book, which is set in Ghana and centers on a young woman, Afi, who is forced into an arranged marriage by her mother. The excerpt focused on Afi’s first meeting with her husband several weeks after the marriage and demonstrated her style of short, straightforward sentences with a strong focus on description.

“The sound startled me and I dropped the phone,” Medie read. “I hadn’t heard the lift stop and open on my floor.”

Next, Zinna was asked to read from her novel about an adjunct pro-

fessor, Lauren, who grieves the loss of her parents while forming a bond with Siri, a student grieving the loss of her own mother. Zinna’s soft voice narrated this thoughtful and introspective excerpt, which contrasted Lauren and Siri’s experiences with loss.

“I’d white-knuckled it,” Zinna read. “And scrambled, and cried, and ruined my chances, and lost myself.”

Finally, Abulhawa was asked to read from her novel, which follows the daughter of Palestinian refugees, Nahr, through “her transformation as a woman,” while dealing with hardships like becoming a sex worker. Her reading showcased the most daring, sharply shifting tone halfway through the excerpt when Abulhawa revealed that Nahr’s father was “f—king” someone other than her mother.

When Esguerra asked the authors to comment on the importance of the female-led relationships in their narratives, the responses revealed that, in all three books, women play a central role in shaping the growth of the female protagonists. While these female relationships do not always come from the most likely places, like the significant friendship between Abulhawa’s Nahr and the woman who facilitated her prostitution, they all leave meaningful impacts on the women.

“I wanted to write about how the people around us [and] how the women around us, shape our lives,” Medie said.

The other authors shared similar sentiments, which Esguerra expanded on by asserting the significance of representing female relationships, especially in societies where women are undervalued.

“[There’s] this sort of power sphere that women wield in spaces where they’re disenfranchised,” Esguerra said. “They’re still wielding relational power amongst themselves.”

Esguerra made the event especially engaging through her familiarity with and passion for each of the books being discussed. Her position as a reader rather than an author gave her the unique ability on several occasions to connect what the authors said specifically about their books to a larger meaning, making the discussion relevant to viewers who had yet to read all of the novels.

Following the responses about the narrative importance of female relationships, the discussion moved to the importance of place. For Zinna, the long summer days in Sweden offered a contrast to the depth of Lauren’s grief.

For both Abulhawa and Medie,

place was important to their writing on a personal level. Abulhawa, who was a Palestinian refugee herself, discussed the emotional shifts that accompany Nahr’s movement from place to place after being displaced from her home country. Medie, born in what she calls the “small town” of Ho, Ghana, also used movement as an influence for emotional growth, making a very intentional choice to begin her character’s story in Medie’s own birthplace.

“I grew up somehow never reading a book set in my hometown,” Medie said. “So place is very important for me as a writer.”

While discussing language and code-switching, or alternating between multiple languages in one conversation or passage, each author offered a slightly different perspective. Zinna referenced the wall built up by language for her American protagonist who moves to a foreign country and struggles to form relationships. Medie resisted heavy translation in her work, noting that it can underestimate the reader when context clues are sufficient to convey meaning. Abulhawa likewise tried not to translate too much Arabic for her readers. In certain areas where she did do so, she translated Arabic phrases directly

into English to maintain their original meaning, such as “morning of goodness” instead of “good morning.”

The event ended with interpretations of the novels in relation to the event title — “Writing Women, Writing Resilience.” The books chosen for the event featured a variety of different struggles that women are forced to overcome. Zinna’s novel focuses on grief, a common experience relatable to many, including Zinna herself, who strove to convey her own messy experience with grief instead of the cleaner version that her editors wanted. Similarly, Medie and Abulhawa’s novels demonstrate the ways in which women deal with the obstacles of lower societal positions, from loveless marriage to prostitution. While Medie emphasized the importance of “tiny victories,” Abulhawa instead challenged the event title by commenting on the redundancy of the adjective “resilience” in describing women.

“Most of the world has put women in positions of powerlessness,” Abulhawa said. “There is a quality in women everywhere that comes from having to navigate your life, create spaces of power when you’re meant to be powerless. You can call it resilience if you want.”

# A return to the classic Marvel model of storytelling

After the recent success of “WandaVision,” the new series on Disney+ makes a smaller splash

Caitlin Woodford | Senior Writer

This past Friday, the Marvel franchise released the first episode of the highly anticipated series “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier.” As the second installment of the partnership between Marvel and streaming platform Disney+, the show marks a distinct shift in the franchise’s scale of content. With most of the Marvel production effort backing large-scale theatrical releases, both “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” and the recently wrapped-up “WandaVision” see the immensely popular franchise turning its attention to the previously unsuccessful realm of television. But where “WandaVision” leaned into the medium in unique and engaging ways, “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” — thus far — falls a bit flat.

The opening episode brings us into the Marvel Cinematic Universe — colloquially, the “MCU” — six months after the events of the studio’s last major film “Avengers: Endgame.” We immediately follow the “Falcon” Sam Wilson — played by Anthony Mackie

— in a classic Marvel initial action sequence, a loosely defined bad guy has hijacked a United States Air Force jet, and the Falcon is tasked with rescuing the kidnapped pilot and taking down the enemies before the jet flies into contested airspace. Lots of punching, kicking and general mayhem ensues.

As the episode continues, the action dwindles, replaced instead with a heavy load of background context for both Wilson and Bucky Barnes, the “Winter Soldier” — played by Sebastian Stan — who we learn is on a self-redemption journey to make reparations for the violence he had wreaked throughout his life. The episode doesn’t bring our heroes together just yet — instead, it focuses on their own internal struggles and difficulties — an approach which, though likely essential to the story, comes off a bit heavy-handed.

The problem with this beginning of “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” is not that it breaks from the Marvel tradition, but that it tries to stick to

the formula too closely, to the detriment of the medium. The 47-minute episode attempts to collapse the entire emotional and action scope of a typical Marvel movie into the limited time frame, resulting in fast-paced dialogue full of overwhelming clichés and somewhat forced emotionality interspersed with long, monotonous action sequences. While these features are to be expected from Marvel Studios projects — the franchise is never one to shy away from a good fight or cheesy one-liner — in a typical Marvel film these have the opportunity to be spread out over a significantly longer runtime. Here, the emotion and the action breaks aren’t yet earned.

As exposition, the pilot serves its purpose, but is ultimately a bit scattered and inconclusive. This is not, however, to say that the series as a whole does not have the potential to grow — the plot lines established in the opening episode provide plenty of material for the series to play with, but if the writers try to pack as much

into each episode as they packed into the pilot, we are in for a long and tiring ride.

Though the plot itself is a bit compressed and jumpy, the redeeming force of the episode — which will likely eventually determine the quality of the show — comes from the performances of Mackie and Stan. Both were already established reliable favorites as side characters in the Marvel Universe before the concept of the series came about, and “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” is a long-overdue feature of both of their acting chops.

Mackie’s Sam Wilson is alternately careful and energetic at all the right moments, a compelling and genuinely believable hero figure who handles the range of emotionality with a great deal of skill and care. Stan’s performance is equally strong — he plays Barnes with a laissez-faire approach that is deepened and rounded out by both touching, quiet moments of sadness and a subtle but dynamic

sense for comedic timing. The two are genuinely great actors when given the opportunity to be, and as a result the most compelling moments of the episode don’t come from the forced dialogue, but from the moments where the two leads are given space to breathe and shine — a phenomenon that bodes well for future episodes focusing on their relationship.

After seeing the experimental and well-paced series “WandaVision” hit the small screen, “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” certainly feels like a return to the humdrum norm of Marvel content. It remains to be seen whether the show will take any risks in terms of television format — “WandaVision” achieved this with great success in its nod to sitcom history, but so far “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” appears to be playing it safe by sticking to the tried and true formula. Still, for the performances alone the show is worth the watch — and who knows, perhaps there are more tricks hiding up Marvel’s sleeve.

# HEALTH & SCIENCE

## Unexpected stock market success surprised in 2020

Despite plummets in some company stocks due to COVID-19 restrictions, stay-at-home stocks and federal funding have kept the market alive

Lucie Rutherford | Staff Writer

As the country began to shut down in March 2020, the U.S. stock market took a huge hit. From its early-year highs, the market had dropped 34 percent by March 23, 2020. In the following months, the market journeyed into an unprecedented cycle — one which Michael Gallmeyer, University professor of commerce and director of the Center for Investors and Financial Markets, said compressed five years into one.

A usual market cycle experiences a full transversal through an up-and-down market where down markets normally last one year and up markets close to four years, Gallmeyer said in an interview with The Cavalier Daily. Due to the abnormalities of 2020, the March drop placed the market in decline then it began an up cycle throughout the remainder of the year. By the close of 2020, roughly nine months after the pandemic declaration, the stock market was at record highs, contrasting with the fact that the economy had faced the worst yearly decline since 1946.

According to Ed Burton, professor of economics and finance at the University, part of the unexpected success of the market can be attributed to a small group of stay-at-home stocks, such as Zoom and Amazon. These stocks have become a significant part of the S&P 500 — the stock market index that measures stock performance in the 500 largest publicly traded companies in the U.S. The success of stay-at-home stocks has made up for the decline in industries like restaurants, retail and entertainment.

"Only those areas that could be done online thrived," Burton said. "Now, interestingly enough, those areas got big enough and strong enough to carry the entire stock market to all-time highs ... The stock market [is trading] well above where it traded just before COVID-19."

Gallmeyer adds that it is not only stay-at-home stocks, but also sectors like home improvement that have amped up the markets. The most well-known are companies such as Home Depot and Lowe's.

In addition to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions and changing consumer demands, the extent of government intervention in the markets has drastically changed the fates of some companies.

"Policymakers in the U.S. gov-

ernment as well as plenty of foreign governments ... took a bet and said, 'We can get past COVID ... we want to figure out a way to preserve these businesses,'" Gallmeyer said. "Let's not let all these small businesses fail. Let's not let the airlines fail. Let's figure out a way to put them in suspend mode for a bit until we can get to the point that we can restart economies."

The combination of consumer changes and government intervention is what seems to have led to the unprecedented one-year cycle, which started with the tanking of stocks three months into 2020.

Over the following few months, government-offered recovery options and interventions by the Federal Reserve System — the U.S. central bank — propped markets back up. For example, the U.S. Congress passed the \$2.2 trillion dollar Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act in March 2020, which provided assistance to businesses and citizens and likely encouraged market investments, while the Federal Reserve bought up billions of dollars worth of corporate bonds to help large companies stay afloat.

Then in the months of July, August and September, technology companies predominately drove the markets while most other stocks lagged behind.

Despite its resiliency, the mar-

ket became hypersensitive to news regarding vaccine trials and government bailout packages, which caused it to experience fluctuations.

"If there was a new government bailout package put in place, the market reacted strongly to that," Gallmeyer said. "Any of the trials that came out about the vaccines were also big bumps in the markets."

Following Pfizer's early-November announcement that its vaccine was 90 percent effective after phase three trials, stocks surged as hopes of an economic re-opening increased. Additionally, the S&P 500 experienced a 12.5 percent increase from March 24-27, 2020 — the period in which the CARES Act was proposed and passed, according to research conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

Despite the market success, the U.S. economy experienced a much tougher response. This was exemplified by a 6.5 percent to 14.7 percent transition in U.S. unemployment rates from January to April of 2020 as increasing COVID-19 infections led to layoffs and slowed hiring. When it comes to the dichotomy of a successful stock market and poor economy, Gallmeyer notes that the market should be seen as an economic predictor.

"A good rule of thumb is [to]

think about what you see happening in the stock market right now ... as an indication of what's going to be happening in these economies six months to a year out," Gallmeyer said.

In terms of economic predictions, the success of the recent markets can be attributed to three major aspects. Aside from government interventions which boosted companies that may have otherwise gone bankrupt, Gallmeyer emphasizes vaccine success and positive investor perceptions, otherwise known as market sentiment.

In comparison to the United Kingdom and the U.S., the European Union has experienced a lag in vaccine rollouts, and E.U. equity markets have taken a hit due to their slower ability to reopen. Because vaccine rollouts increase anticipations for an open economy by the end of 2021 and into 2022, heightened vaccination rates improve market sentiment. With a positive prevailing attitude towards the market future, Gallmeyer says that investors are seeing "light at the end of the tunnel."

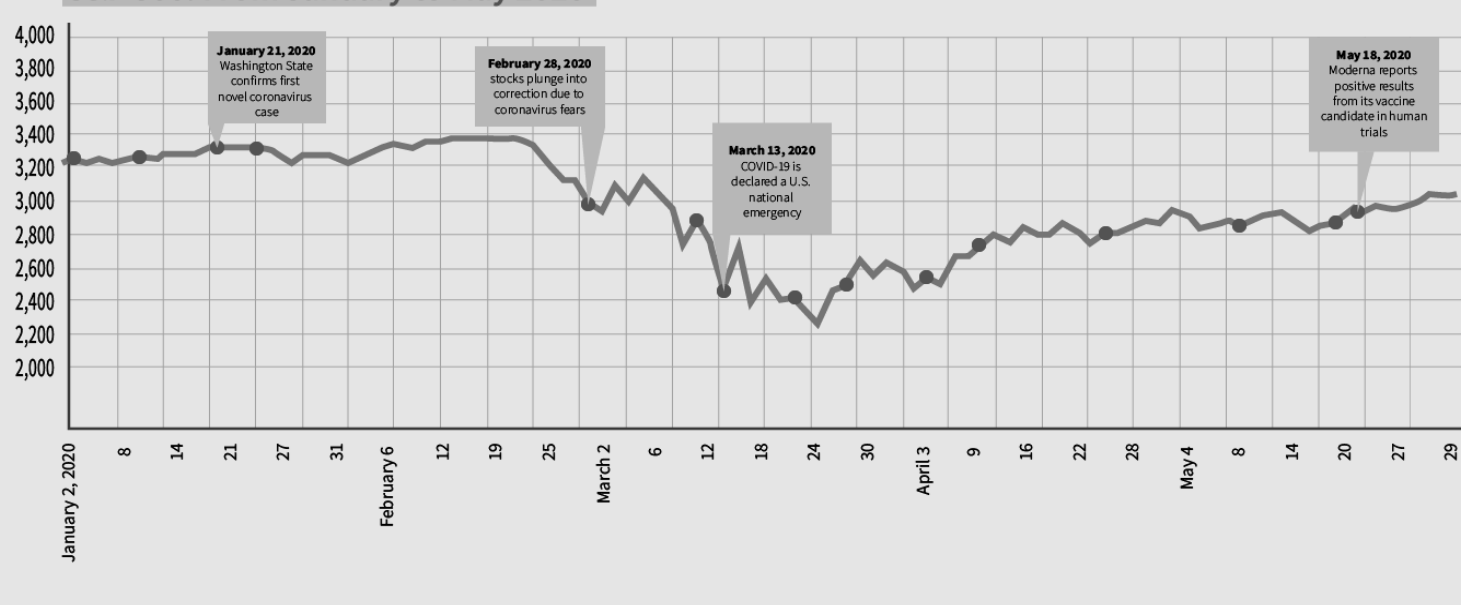
Now that the U.S. has surpassed a year since the initial market decline, Gallmeyer and Burton say it is hinting at a return to normalcy. Stocks that have gone into hibernation — industries like travel and leisure — are starting to come out

of hibernation. Despite this reversal, stay-at-home stocks such as Zoom have likely been propelled five to 10 years due how quickly they have been adopted into everyday life. At the same time, Gallmeyer adds that the success of technology stocks should not imply that complete virtuality is the solution to running universities, businesses and corporations due to the importance of face-to-face interactions.

Now that hindsight is 20/20, Burton reflects on the unexpected nature of the market's reaction to the coronavirus pandemic.

"By and large, the stock market seems to have benefited from COVID-19," Burton said. "It had one of the most incredible rallies in the history of financial markets from March of 2020 to the current day. If anybody had asked me in March of last year [how COVID-19 economic restrictions would affect the stock market], I would have unequivocally told you that it would go down and have a very bad year, and in fact, it had one of the best years in history."

S&P 500: From January to May 2020



HANNAH KETT | THE CAVALIER DAILY

# Exploring maternal health disparities among Black women

Benita Mayo of the U.Va. Equity Center started a photo documentary highlighting pervasive racial maternal and newborn health disparities

Jordan Schuck | Staff Writer

Due to the continued impact of racism in the U.S. healthcare system and existing societal inequities, Black women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy or child-birth related causes such as preeclampsia, hypertension, preterm labor, hemorrhage and infection while Black children are two times more likely to die as newborns and be born underweight and premature. Understanding the implications of these health disparities is crucial to eventual implementation of treatment and policy changes in the scope of healthcare environments.

Benita Mayo, community fellow at the U.Va. Equity Center, is working to give perspective on the impact of maternal health disparities on Black women and newborns through a photo documentary. University sociology doctoral candidate Patrice Wright has been assisting Mayo as a source given that her research focuses on African American maternal disadvantage and how Black women emotionally process pregnancy.

These disparities in healthcare are due to the impact of racism and segregation hidden within the infrastructure of U.S. society. To this day, historical residential segregation puts Black people at a disadvantage for proper wages, educational opportunities, environmental factors and healthcare access, whether through hospital care or insurance.

"Just the day-to-day experiences of living in America as a Black person can cause stress," Wright said.

Black women particularly have been shown to experience more "weathering" or persistent health deterioration as a consequence of repeated environmental stressors throughout their lifetime like social, economic and political adversity. This means that due to the effort they must exert to cope with acute and chronic stressors, they gain higher wear and tear on the body that wears on their systems, deteriorating their health quicker and aging them faster.

"So in addition to poverty, joblessness, underemployment — all of which has stress — experiencing racism and discrimination adds stress," Wright said. "All of those things can impact one's health, specifically in low birth weight, but also having other health complications."

Mayo, like Wright, saw the prevalence of these inequalities and discrimination and felt that she could utilize her skills as a photographer to illustrate Black women's experience through pregnancy and childbirth in today's society.

"I remember hearing two stories on the news that just really made an impact, and once I heard the stories, I couldn't unhear them," Mayo said, referencing Beyonce and Serena Williams sharing their own experiences with pregnancy and childbirth. "I thought to myself if these women are not being listened to, then what chances does the average person have?"

Both celebrities endured difficult pregnancy complications that resulted in them undergoing emergency cesarean deliveries. Beyonce developed preeclampsia, which can cause seizures, high blood pressure, and restricts fetal growth, and Serena Williams developed a pulmonary embolism due to blood clots that caused shortness of breath.

Not long after, Mayo began her photo project in partnership with Birth Sisters of Charlottesville by meeting with Doreen Bonnet, the executive director of Birth Sisters of Charlottesville, and was given the opportunity to take a doula training class.

"I realized that people needed to know more about them and more about what they do," Mayo said.

The Birth Sisters of Charlottesville is a doula collective composed of women of color that support other women of color during their pregnancies while also addressing the disparities in maternal health. As doulas, the group's members support their clients through the entire preg-



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nancy and birth process, from prenatal visits to labor and delivery to postpartum checkups.

"We know that our mothers feel more confident about their birth journey, and they feel like that because we can relate to each other," Bonnet said. "They just feel more at ease, and they really like that there's someone there to advocate for them."

Since doula support is only one solution to this greater problem, Birth Sisters of Charlottesville also participates in multiple forms of advocacy by presenting data to medical professionals, working with the state for medical benefits and funding for doula services and organizing an exploratory committee to bring a Black OBGYN to Charlottesville.

Change all comes down to awareness and communication, which is what Mayo's project hopes to accomplish. She hopes to capture a sense of what Black women actually go through, which is very different from other races, and eventually help fundraise for

the doula community.

"I think my project will be a benefit because photos are powerful, and photos have the ability to affect change," Mayo said.

Mayo plans to maintain a relationship with five to six mothers participating in doctor's visits and the births as a doula herself to illustrate not only an inside look at the experience of pregnancy and childbirth by Black women but also the nuances of their everyday lives. She hopes to accomplish this by following a mother through a normal day, so she can be there to capture looks of frustration or a mother's crushed face after a doctor's appointment, eventually culminating in the joy of childbirth.

"I hope that they feel the resiliency of Black women in this community because we are very resilient in spite of what we encounter and we move through it," Bonnet said.

Not only does this project bring awareness and education to the public but it also provides hope for these mothers.

"I'm hoping you'll see a lot of joy in the outcomes," Bonnet said, "We want them to be honored. We want outcomes to be celebrated. We want them to be seen and heard."

Mayo's photo documentary is expected to be published by the end of the year.



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