

# The Cistercian Informer

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by Lucas Lopez '24



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by Chase Frutos '21



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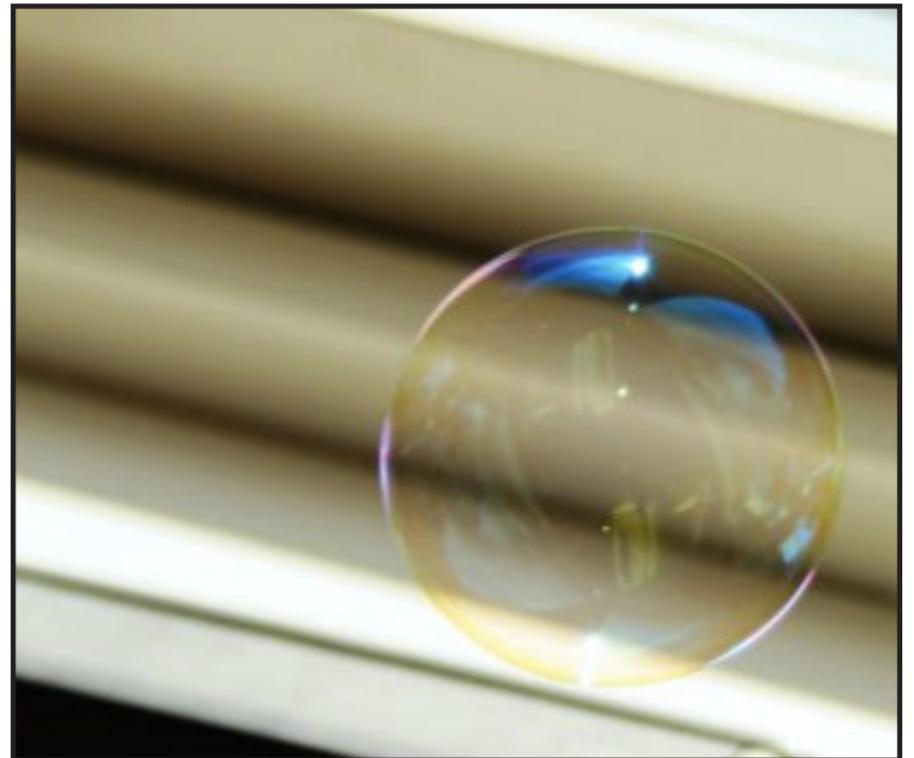
**"Sudan"**  
By Dominic Andres '21  
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# The Cistercian Bubble

By Ethan Ramchandani '21, who  
thinks Cistercian is on the rise

*\*The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of Cistercian or The Cistercian Informer.\**

One of the unintended consequences of attending Cistercian is being raised in a sheltered bubble. The school typically appeals to a certain demographic, whether racial or political, and fosters a particular point of view within the student body, while simultaneously limiting exposure to viewpoints unaligned with Cistercian principle. Due to the nature of Cistercian being a Catholic school, it is understandable that a large portion of the student body is Catholic as well. However, Cistercian shouldn't be a place for them to reaffirm their viewpoints without consideration for other faiths or political beliefs. As an educational institution, Cistercian should be a place that exposes its students to more than the view the school sub-



scribes to.

Many factors can lead to a limited number of views that the students are exposed to, such as diversity. The fact that some graduating classes are missing representation from entire races is undesirable, and one can see the impact of this at the school. Cistercian's low diversity contributes to a lack of

attention given to different viewpoints. Of course, Cistercian cannot control which ethnicities apply to the school, but having recently gone to the Dallas Private School Preview at Greenhill, I encountered a diverse crowd of people mentioning that they would be applying to the school. This is not reflected...

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# The Shapiro Question

By Evan O'Suilleabhan '21, who does  
not revere Ben Shapiro

Ben Shapiro holds some problematic opinions, yet he is very popular among Cistercian students. His videos are often presented as paragons of truth and beacons of rationality in a time where political discourse has been reduced to name-calling and pettiness. However, in this regard, I would argue that Shapiro proudly participates in this pettiness. He often insults his opponents personally, and goes out of his way to call transgender people by their birth pronouns for no reason other than to get a reaction, to 'trigger.' Shapiro is an entertainer, and a talented one too, but he is neither an academic nor a philosopher. He's just a radio personality, and like fellow radio personality Stephen A. Smith, he should not actually be taken seriously by anyone about anything.

Ben Shapiro is racist. Time and time again, he has denied any claims that black people are at a significant disadvantage in the

United States. He posits that disproportionate poverty, unemployment, and incarceration in black communities are a result not of institutional racism spanning centuries (from slavery to discriminatory housing policies to Jim Crow to the War on Drugs and beyond), but rather of personal choices. According to Ben, African Americans are imprisoned more because they commit more crimes, and they tend to be poorer because they refuse to get a job and rely solely on welfare. The implication here is that there is something inherently wrong with black people, that their woes are the product of intrinsic, genetic faults like lower IQs or something. Shapiro consistently fails to see beyond the surface level of the issues he comments on, either intentionally (because of malice and outright bigotry) or unintentionally (because of incompetence). Either way, he is by no means a credible source of information.

If you feel that I'm reaching, that our intellectual lord and savior Mr. Shapiro is above racism, . . .

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## Youtube's Inactivity

Lucas Lopez '24  
who follows Pewdiepie.

YouTube is an very important source of entertainment for millions of different people across the world, and it gives them more ways to learn about current events. However, YouTube has done a few things in monitoring their platform that not everybody has been the biggest fan of.

Many people who make a living off YouTube gain revenue from advertisements on their videos. YouTube, for better or worse, has been removing some of these advertisement opportunities from videos that have been deemed "not advertiser friendly" by its algorithm (the algorithm is YouTube's computerized process of determining whether or not a video is appropriate). Many people claim that the algorithm is too strict, and others disagree by saying that the algorithm works well and that it is the creator's fault for making inappropriate content that isn't suitable for advertisers. As of right now, the only step YouTube has taken to remedy the situation and deal with the

controversy is to add a feature where content creators can have a manual review done on a demonetized video, which means getting a YouTube employee to watch the video and deeming it suitable or not for monetization (monetization means the video is able to generate revenue from advertisements). In an effort to not have to go through the dull and grueling process hundreds of times, some channels have tried to change the content they make in order to appease the algorithm. This is where the algorithm becomes even more problematic. Since a channel's previous videos are not eligible for advertisements, YouTube demonetizes their newer content, even though the new content fits in line with the guidelines. This has caused some people to leave the video creation platform entirely, as they can no longer make any worthwhile amount of money. While most seek out more stable means of supporting themselves many move to streaming sites like Twitch or Mixer. This has been an ongoing problem for YouTube Creators since 2012, and there is no solution or any attempts to address the situation. It also doesn't appear that this issue will be re-

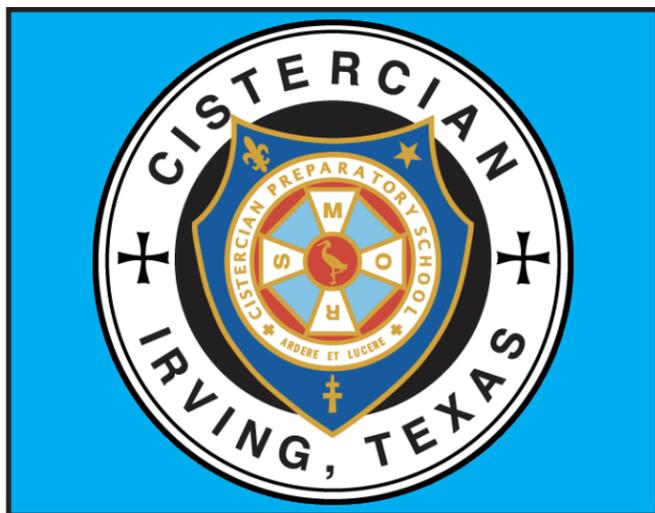
solved in the foreseeable future.

Another topic of debate among internet media users is YouTube's current copyright system. If a content creator thinks that another creator has violated the copyright terms that YouTube has set in place, they can "copyright strike" the video. By doing this, the person whose copyright was infringed upon takes all the revenue generated from the video, and the other person gets a "strike." Once your channel has received three strikes, it gets deleted along with all the videos you had uploaded previously. This penalty is extremely harsh. The issue is that people have been striking each other not because there is a legitimate copyright infringement, but because they don't like the other person or what the other person has to say. Many creators see this as a reason to replace the system, while others believe that YouTube should keep the system but put certain checks



Photo By moscow.-live.ru

into the system to keep it from being used in a way different from its original intent. So far, YouTube has done absolutely nothing to fix this. One notable example of an abuse of this system is that on May of 2018, a woman who goes by the name of Alinity became the center of a copyright strike conflict with a very popular YouTube creator known as Pewdiepie. YouTube did nothing to help fix this issue, but the two thankfully came to an agreement on their own terms later that year. However, many people still suffer from this problem, and YouTube has continued to not act.



Harrison Hart '28  
who is new around here.

First former Arthur Moran had this to say when asked about his experiences with Cistercian:

So far, Cistercian has been what I expected and more. I was excited to start the school year, but there has been a lot of change. I have more freedom and responsibility than I have ever had before. I thought that maybe I would get a couple eighties and maybe a seventy-five, but it has been much harder than I expected. I study extremely hard every night, and I still only have decent grades. Still, I have gotten some good grades. Though I am not getting much sleep, I am learning a lot.

former school, I didn't have half of the freedom. Cistercian is similar to my old school, Christ the King, except it is harder and I have more control. At Christ the King I almost always got hundreds, but here my grades are lower.

I also love gym class. At my former school, we would end up doing jump rope or something like that. Here, we do stuff like dodgeball and we get to do tournaments Ultimate Football. Some of my other favorite classes so far are Art with Mr. Munguia, Latin with Father Ambrose, and Social Studies with Mr. Joseph. I like Art because it is a time to be very creative. I enjoy Latin because I think it is fun to learn all the new phrases. Also, I think Social Studies

## A Firstie's Experience

I also like the freedom and responsibility that comes with Cistercian. It is up to me to decide how I want to spend my time. I do like having time to study and do homework at ten-minute break or at lunch. At my

is fun because I like learning about ancient civilizations. I remember the first day I was at Cistercian very well. I had to haul all my books to my desk, and try to get everything set up. Then, Father Ambrose and a bunch of seniors came in and started to tell us about what they remembered about their first day. I hope that I will someday have as good memories as the seniors do.

Another first former, Harrison Hart said this when asked about Cistercian:

My mom is a staff member at Cistercian. So, since I was little my parents wanted me to go to Cistercian, if I could get in. My relatives always told me it was a challenging school. When testing got closer, I started doubting I would get in. Later on, my mom came home with the letter that said if I was accepted. I read it, and found out I was in. I was excited and called my family to let them know.

When I got to Cistercian, I was anxious. I put my books in my desk, and then we started "listening" to the seniors' tips. Next, we went

on a tour. After the first few days, I knew that it was different from my previous school. I liked that we had separate classes with different teachers and gym clothes instead of our normal uniforms for P.E. class. I knew early that E-Lab was a tough subject and that the assignments would be a challenge. I like Latin because it goes by faster than other classes. I think P.E is fun because we do different sports for each day of the week. I especially enjoy Ultimate Football. I liked Social Studies class, but I didn't do well on the tests. After one whole month, I know how hard it really is, but I am also excited for the next eight years.

*We hope all the first formers had a great first quarter at Cistercian, and highly encourage all of them to come write for the Informer!*

## BY THE NUMBERS



Funds for XC

\$0

Max Number of clubs a student can do

7

Days until Christmas

75

Quizbowl Wins

2

Weeks left in the quarter

“1”

## The Cistercian Bubble (cont'd)

well in the current student body. However, I have hope that this will be changed with these next incoming students, who seem eager to join and contribute to our school.

In addition to the lack of racial diversity at the school, the position of students on the political spectrum is not varied either. As a result, the atmosphere at Cistercian makes it particularly hard for dissenting voices to be heard. More often than not, an opinion coming from the other side of the political spectrum does not provoke conversation. It does not provoke the curiosity to figure out what reasoning or logic lies behind these views. The conversation is stifled by the unwillingness of students to even hear these opposing beliefs out. For example, in a conversation about the refugee caravans coming up from Central America, one student offered their input on the situation

by saying that the refugees should fix their countries instead of coming here. They were quick to dismiss the fact that it is possible they would have been more likely to die if they had stayed put, or that if they did try to make an attempt to change their country, it would almost certainly have been squashed. Both of these viewpoints have the good-willed person's reasoning and logic behind them, but the problem is that only one of the views is given any weight.

Even worse than the topics that barely get a discussion, there are those that won't even be touched upon, or, even if they are, they don't get fair treatment from either side (Evan O'Suilleabhain explains perfectly in his Ben Shapiro article how these important issues do not get properly treated in class). The school's low diversity should not be seen as part of the problem, because

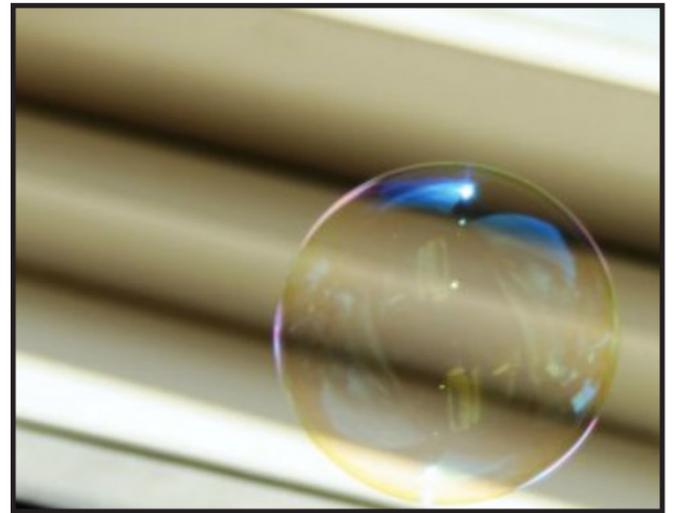


Photo By Pixels.com

it is not. It is just a factor contributing to the viewpoints of the majority of the student body. However, it can and should be fixed without fundamentally overhauling the makeup of the student body. We must simply be aware of this situation and strive to seek the truth, which in turn will help us understand the opinions and beliefs of others in their own pursuit of truth.

To say it again, the diversity is not the problem. The low diversity merely contributes to a pitfall that the student body consistently falls victim to. As a community, we should be mindful of others and create a more welcoming environment.

*Let's start a conversation! Come by an Informer meeting to see how you can respond to this piece!*

## HOCO Advice



Photo by Fr. Raphael

*By Chase Frutos '21, who wishes there was a soccer HOCO.*

Homecoming is the biggest, most jovial, and, sometimes, even the most nerve-racking event during the school year. It's an event that evokes a feeling of nostalgia like no other. The alumni come back from all over the country and reminisce about the amazing years they shared together at Cistercian while watching the incredibly exciting Homecoming Football Game.

For a student at Cistercian, Homecoming is a special time during the school year because it's when we get to have fun with

friends, take part in our school's intense school spirit at the football game, and de-stress from the rigors of our curriculum. However, with the excitement of homecoming also comes the thrill

of asking a date to the homecoming dance, something every student at every high school dreads.

Freshmen, you have never attended the homecoming dance before and are probably feeling the same fears and stresses I have felt. First off, as young men, your first priority at homecoming is your date. If she has fun then you will most definitely have fun, too. Secondly, don't be afraid to let loose on the dance floor and bust out your favorite dance moves. Lastly, pick out the snazziest tie that you own and wear it. There's nothing better than having the coolest looking tie around. When everyone wears a suit, the tie becomes the most important part of the whole outfit! Your tie can make or break homecoming, so choose

wisely. A few freshmen shared their thoughts with me about homecoming. Truman Griffith said he was most excited about "the new experiences I will get to share with my classmates." William Coulter said he was most excited about "the cool decorations as well as the student body's effort in creating Homecoming." William is exactly right. Cistercian Homecoming is special because of the role we students play in the creation of such a fun event.

Cistercian's Homecoming isn't just any other dance; it's our dance and we only get one a year. The setup for the dance starts three weeks prior to dance night and we strongly encourage (and technically require) each and every one of you to come by and share in the fun experience of transforming our gym into this year's theme of Night at the Museum. It's always an amazing feeling to look back at the finished product and take pride in our school's combined efforts to create such a fun party. Through our shared unity of school pride and our special bond of brotherhood, we can make Cistercian Homecoming better than any other!

## Freshman Football

*Nate and Cole '23  
who are the future.*

This year the freshman football players began their transition into high school athletics. They have started this year with a lot of potential. Freshman corner back Mac Schneider says that it is strenuous, physically and mentally. He says that the competition is stronger and smarter. However, Mac is happy he gets to play football in upper school.

Half of the practices are dedicated to offense, the other half to defense. The players are split up into their individual position groups during practice. On offense, Coach Burk works with the quarterbacks, Coach Bruce with the running backs, Coaches Gray and Marin with the linemen, Coach Taylor with the tight ends, and Coaches Manos and Nevitt with the receiver corps. On defense, Coach Burk works with the tackles, Coach Gray with the ends, Coach Taylor with the linebackers, Coach Manos with the corners, and Coach Bruce with the safeties. Aside from the individual

position group aspect of practice, the coaches hold team meetings as well. The scout team does a great job challenging the starters during these team run-throughs. Because of the efficiency and rigor of the Cistercian football practice, as well as the program's collective effort dedicated to winning games, Cistercian is bound for a late season title run.

In the JV team's first game, they took a crushing loss to the Dallas Christian Chargers. Freshman quarterback/safety Dan O'Toole described his first high school experience as "exuberating," despite the team's loss. The team took a commanding lead early on and it looked like another win for the Hawks. Running back Ryan Smith dashed for a seventy yard touchdown run on the game's first play. As the game progressed, the Chargers began to pull ahead. The Hawks ran out of fuel and ended up losing. Stephen Cox's conclusion from the game was that the team needed better conditioning in order to compete against teams with more depth.

The JV team played their second game on September 5th against our rivals, the St. Marks Lions. The Hawks won the game

by a crushing score of 50-0. St. Marks being destroyed was largely attributed to Stephen Cox, who scored five touchdowns.

They came back from their loss to Dallas Christian and proved their worth. At the varsity game that Friday, freshmen players Dan O'Toole, Cole Burk, Stephen Cox, and Nonso Unini took the trip to St. Marks to stand as swing players. Late in the game, Nonso Unini had a strip sack and Dan O'toole had a tackle. The Hawks' momentum carried on to their game against Greenhill, winning 34-18. At the varsity game, freshmen Dan O'Toole, Stephen Cox, Nonso Unini, and Cole Burk suited up for the big game once again. Cistercian would go on to demolish Greenhill, winning 55-0. Cistercian was beating Greenhill so thoroughly that the coaches decided to give the freshmen a few snaps and a chance to prove themselves. Nonso Unini finished the game with around 30 yards despite his



*Photo by Fr. Raphael*

short amount of game time. Greenhill players had to swarm him to bring him down. Nonso definitely proved his ability to run the ball well. The drive was finished off by Stephen Cox who scored a twenty yard touchdown to end the game. Stephen also had around thirty yards at the end of the game. This rushing duo showed that the new freshmen are an undeniably powerful force.

It is clear the freshmen have a lot of talent and potential. Quarterback Dan O'Toole says, "I have full confidence in my team moving forward and we will not lose another game, and that's a promise! I am a man of my word!"



*Photo by Fr. Raphael*

## Don't Run From XC

in other team sports. Taking it to the extreme, cross country can even be seen as an embodiment of the Cistercian way of life. This sport emphasizes community, passion, and perseverance, all of which are at

the core of our school.

Cross country started as a way of conditioning rowers in offseason, and it still can be seen as conditioning for the next sport season. However, it is not just a season of running drills. Each practice in cross country requires the athlete to battle fatigue, and the only thing a runner can look forward to is a meet on Saturday. Everything about running involves pushing oneself to be better. Nico Walz (VIII), the number one varsity runner, said, "Cross country is certainly a tough sport; you have to choose the amount of pain you are willing to endure. But I guess that requires you to put your whole soul into it, really reaching for something outside of you. Coach Roane definitely does a great job of

encouraging us to surpass our own expectations." Nico really gets to the heart of cross-country, which is going beyond what you think you can do every single day.

Not only is cross country a hard sport, but it also has very little reward for the team. All their Saturday morning meets are eclipsed by varsity football games the Friday night before. Since cross country is hard and out of the spotlight, a brotherhood forms between the runners. Each athlete on the team knows that the only people who understand his pain are his fellow teammates. The team is also aware that everyone counts, so slower runners still have to work in order for the team to win. Stephen LeSage (V) said it is "probably the most intense and team centered sport. Everyone knows the team is only as good as the last couple of runners. And when you are one of those last few runners, the pressure is all on you to pass the next couple guys ahead of you."

Everyone who runs cross country is familiar with the dread that comes before a full week of practice, as well as the joy in having finished the Saturday meet. Every

member, despite waking up at five for morning practice and dealing with the daily soreness that follows, perseveres because of a reason that changes throughout the season. First is the fear of being behind everyone else, next is the drive to make oneself better, and lastly comes an understanding of those who run alongside you. Running is beautiful in itself, but those who run together love it (even while hating the pain) because it is a period of bonding with their teammates. This is why a runner can endure the pain or soreness that comes from running hills at least once a week and over six thousand meters on the track.

Cross country may not be as complex as my words seem to have made it, but it is important for an outsider to be aware that it isn't just running. It is a brotherhood built on mutual suffering, which is as close as it gets to describing the brotherhood at Cistercian. Though it may not seem fun, cross-country runners always feel a great sense of accomplishment after a full season, and the bonds formed will endure and be mighty.

At Cistercian, cross country is known as the "non-football" fall sport. It is not seen as a fun sport; most people will not join the team in high school, and it receives much less attention than its fall counterpart. Given the option between cross-country or P.E., most would take the latter. Comparing it to other sports, cross country is similar on a basic level in that it is a team sport and involves running. However, a runner participating in cross country experiences a much different sense of camaraderie than one does

*Noah Vetter '22  
who needs to attack the hill.*

## Profile: Tyler Childers

*Alex Smith, '21,  
who is in that country state  
of mind.*

Over the summer this year, I discovered a new artist while I was vacationing in the plains of Burnet, Texas. His name is Tyler Childers and he is a young, talented musician who came onto the country scene in 2017. I hesitate to even call him "country" out of fear of losing many readers, but I'm here to say it's not what you think. He has what many modern country artists are missing with his eloquent, emotional lyrics. He also comes from the states of Kentucky and West Virginia, adding a clear element of folk to his music.

The first album he released is titled "Purgatory" and has the hit track "Feathered Indians." That was the first song I'd heard by him and I was immediately struck by his powerful, wailing voice. This particular song's lyrics are also truly moving in the way they capture the speaker's affections for a woman; and after all, no one can resist a good love song. Another standout

track from this album which really drew me in is "Tattoos." The song opens up with just Childers' vocals and the bass, which complement each other perfectly. Then the fiddle comes in, making the song resonate and proving that as a genre, "country" possesses far more variety than most think. The cascading melodies that the fiddle brings to the song are beautiful and, strangely, heart-breaking. The song isn't much more than a story, but that's what I love about it. Lastly, I couldn't fail to the first track of the album "I Swear (To God)." This song is nothing short of whimsical as Childers makes an upbeat tune out of his hardships and mistakes. It has an awesome chorus as well as an inspired guitar solo which fully captures the tone of the struggles that he is singing about.

His most recent album, which was just released in August 2019, is titled "Country Squire" and follows up his killer debut record incredibly. The best track on the album is one that hasn't seemed to surface yet, but is titled "Gemini." It's short and sweet, doesn't appear to have a chorus, and it seems to be about his wild, rocky life. Many rock and roll and country singers

talk about those things, but he brings them to life in a truly tangible way for the listener. When listening to music, you look for someone or something to relate to and Childers' music

accomplishes this well. The next song I love is titled "All Your'n" and it was the first single released from this new album. It's a completely new sound for Childers; there's a rhythm guitar that is reminiscent of the Grateful Dead, and the song is also rather joyous. Considering most of his songs don't have that tone to them, that's a big step for the young artist. Lastly, another song that deserves attention is titled "Peace of Mind." This song is as traditionally "country" as it can get; it's just a four minute long story told over some great chord changes. He talks about an old married couple who love each other, but left many things behind to get married. In many of his songs, he embraces the human side of things and that is



Photo By perrymcleodphotos

why he's so easy to relate to. Childers is fully down-to-earth, unlike most artists are in our media-obsessed world.

Tyler Childers was the hot topic artist of this past summer for me, but he hasn't gotten old yet. His songs are comforting for people who need an escape in life, people who have a tough load of homework each night. Maybe his insight on hardships will help you figure out how blessed you are. He's only 28 and I hope he continues to stay relevant. He recently performed at Austin City Limits along with artists like Guns n' Roses and Childish Gambino. So give Tyler Childers a listen and give country a chance; you do live in Texas after all, y'all.



Photo By Virtuaalianu

*Ayden Kowalski, '21,  
who likes heights.*

## In the Heights

as I lamented the pain and struggle inextricably woven into these moments of joy. In the Heights is a triumph in every way, a stunning piece of theatre that drags you into that Manhattan neighborhood

and leaves you there to witness and to fall in love with a world you may not have known, a world that by the end of the show you will want to do anything to protect and make better. It is a musical that moves you to empathy for a place you did not know existed just two hours before, transforming you in that special way that has made so many over the centuries love theatre.

The characters in this play are so richly detailed and so deeply compelling that you will truly believe that these people existed, or at least were composed of pieces of people who the playwright knew at some point. They are defined, as real human beings are, by their subtleties and by their grand statements, in the casual and in the

crucial moments, and because of that, the audience comes to understand these characters at an almost subconscious level, taking in and silently evaluating the cast as one would deduce the nature of any person. Their personalities are conveyed perfectly through both the physical presence of the actors and by the lyrics and music to the brilliant songs throughout the musical, feats of songwriting that quickly inspire a spectator to purchase the soundtrack. The musical elements of this musical are breathtaking, from the heartbreaking epic of an elderly character's self-examination to the wistful triumph of female lead Vanessa's equally moving daydreaming. These are songs that will make the audience laugh, dance, smile, and cry, and that are even more powerful when taken on by the incredibly likable cast of characters that this musical contains.

Every audience member will have a favorite character, and every single character is worthy of the honor. Perhaps you will fall in love first with the lead Usnavy, a young man searching for both the courage to talk to the woman he loves and a home for himself and his cousin;

perhaps Usnavy's cousin Sully will seize your heart with his undeniable charm and fiery love for the people of his neighborhood. Perhaps you will be moved most greatly by Nina's struggle to figure out her future while her parents judge, or maybe Vanessa's dream of escaping to a better place will snatch you away with her on the elevator train. Each of these characters, especially Nina, will captivate you; however, if there is one character who will surprise you, it's Benny. In this production he has a voice that at times shakes under the intense emotions of the character in a way that absolutely breaks your heart.

In the Heights is, simply put, one of the greatest musicals I have ever heard, and one of the most powerful works of art I have ever encountered. I do not merely encourage you to see this show; I beg you to experience it, to let it transport you across the George Washington Bridge to a poor Upper Manhattan neighborhood. Go to this play; let it move you. You will not regret it.

I have never been to Washington Heights, but in some way, I feel like I have encountered it, as if I have stepped ever so slightly within it. I've heard the cries of pi-ragua in the sweltering summer air, waded through a party where people danced as if dancing was as innate as breathing, and ran through the plaza hurling my hands in the air in celebration of simple existence. I've sat as my heart shoved against my chest to join this revelry, this carnival that I did not know before, and felt my lungs heave with compassion

## Beto's Bold Claims

*Coby Scudder '21,  
who can't be tread on.*

Beto O'Rourke made the front page of virtually every newspaper in America when he said, "Hell yes, we're going to take your AR-15, your AK-47, we're not going to allow it to be used on fellow Americans anymore." This statement was very controversial. Many Democrats came out after the incident and said that the clip of Beto saying this will be held over the Democratic Party's head for a long time because this is exactly what many Republicans fear. However, to see how effective a ban on AR-15s and AK-47s would be, we need to analyze it without any emotions and see if it is legal and if it would work.

Beto claims that his proposal is constitutional under the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. This says that the Congress shall have the power "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes." However, there is one major problem with using the

Commerce Clause to justify this action. The keyword in the Commerce Clause is *among*. This means that Congress has the power to regulate interstate commerce, not intrastate commerce. Another keyword in the Commerce Clause, ironically, is the word *commerce* itself. Commerce is defined as the exchange, buying, or selling of commodities. Under the Commerce Clause, the government has no authority to confiscate your AR-15 if you already own it. Beto also says that these guns should be illegal because they are "military-style weapons of war." However, this is exactly why they must be legal. The 2nd Amendment was written by a people who had just fended off a tyrannical government. Without their access to arms, the government would have no reason to fear the people. When you look at the 2nd Amendment like this, it's clear to see how Beto's proposal violates the 2nd Amendment and how someone some people would stand up to the government if something like this happened.

Beto's argument for confiscation is that it would save many lives. However, this is not entirely true. Beto says that his plan would be just

as successful as a similar plan that passed in Australia in 1996. However, this plan did not do much by itself to lower the homicide rate in Australia. In Australia, the homicide rate per 100,000 people in 1996 was 1.9. In the US, it was 7.3. In 2017, the homicide rate was 0.8 in Australia and 5.3 in the US. What this means is that in the same time, the US's homicide rate dropped by 2 per 100,000 and Australia's dropped by 1.1, so Australia's did drop by a higher percentage. However, during this period in the US, there was the Assault Weapons Ban that lasted from 1994 to 2004. This act was not renewed because it did not help with the homicide rate in America. There have been many studies, both government-led and independent, that have said that the assault weapons ban did not help. Another reason that an assault weapon ban would not help is the fact that so few homicides are committed with assault weapons. The vast majority of



*Photo By Mike Hogan*

murders are done with handguns. If Beto really cared about saving lives, he would be pushing for a handgun ban to save as many lives as possible.

Beto's proposed AR-15 confiscation faces many problems, both in terms of legality and effectiveness. The 1994 Assault Weapon ban did not do anything to lower the homicide rate and there's no evidence that a new ban would do anything. His proposal clearly violates the 2nd Amendment and any attempt to make it seem constitutional holds no water. This ban on AR-15s fails and is an attempt to remove Americans' rights.

*The views in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Cistercian Informer.*



*Photo Via "Bandeira nacional no quarto do Gui"*

*Ethan Ramchandani, '21,  
who wants order and progress.*

## Burning Brazil

burnings are a natural part of the forest's lifecycle. However, considering the lack of notable drought and lightning storms, it seems highly unlikely that the fire's cause was indeed natural. In the event

that this forest fire was natural, there is no way that it would grow to such a massive proportion. Unfortunately, the actual cause of the fire is much worse.

The Amazon is roughly four times the size of Alaska and is worth a fortune to many industries that benefit from the plethora of natural resources that the Amazon holds. In January, Brazil elected the current president Bolsonaro. Since his time in office, the Amazon has lost a great deal of land already. Bolsonaro's administration has heavily encouraged the expansion of industry, which requires land. For this reason, people believe that the fires in the Amazon have been set intentionally to clear the forest growth. Previously, parts of the forest were cleared out for the

raising of cows and other livestock. Now, mining, timber, and developmental firms have their eyes set on the Amazon. 2019 has been a rather unfortunate year for the Amazon as it has already lost significantly more forest land than it had in 2018.

The Amazon is approaching a tipping point. The lush greenery may never recover should the fire continue for any longer. Parts of the biome may permanently transform to desert/savannah regions which would not bode well for Brazil's ecosystem. In fact, the impact would be felt worldwide as the forest contains nearly a tenth of all species on the planet. This massive loss of habitat would testify greatly to the number of eradicated species in the last 50 years. Additionally, the Amazon absorbs some 90 billion tons of carbon dioxide that would otherwise pollute our atmosphere. If released, the carbon dioxide would add 38 parts per million to the already existing 415 parts per million which is unarguably significant. Many climate scientists warn that this could be a new tipping point.

As the fire grows, so does the concern. At the most recent G7 summit, the agreed plan was to send

22 million dollars in aid to Brazil to help quell the fire. However, unsurprisingly, Brazilian president Bolsonaro reluctantly refused the money. A feud between Bolsonaro and French PM Macron escalated as they traded blows over each other's wives and each country's heritage sites. Also, Bolsonaro felt as though the G7 summit's decision undermined the sovereignty of Brazil. He felt as though the way the international alliance convened to save the rainforest portrayed Brazil as a no man's land or some colony.

Hope has dwindled as Brazil is now dissolving most sovereign efforts to fight the fires and other countries have now become much more hesitant to send money over. Germany and Norway were among the first to suspend planned donations to the burning country and many more will follow suit. Many people fail to see the significance of what is unfolding in front of them, and much like the technological boom of the last 40 years, our Earth is experiencing changes of the same magnitude. With any luck, the consequences won't be as disastrous.

The crisis of the Amazon rainforest has now taken to the worldwide scene as its dirty laundry burns on Brazil's line. Social media activists have expressed their concern on the situation with #SaveTheAmazon. With the whole world on notice, surely there must be a reasonable explanation for the fires, or at least we hope so.

As the fire in the Amazon blazes on, only recently has there been sufficient media uproar and concern over the cause of the flame. A host of people are convinced that

## Shapiro Question (cont'd)

...I'm afraid that the facts don't care about your feelings. A few years ago, Shapiro infamously tweeted "Israelis like to build. Arabs like to bomb [expletive] and live in open sewage." In a 2007 article titled "The Radical Evil of the Palestinian Arab Population," he claims, among other things, that all the Palestinian people cheered on 9/11 and sometimes use toddlers to carry out suicide bombings. The entire article is pretty disgusting, and it demonstrates quite nicely how, when it comes to Arab people, Shapiro doesn't even try to hide his sweeping hatefulness and prejudice. More recently, he's explicitly expressed support for war with Iran, saying that will solve the problem. In this way, even his pro-life stance, which many Cistercian students and teachers praise him for, is inconsistent with the other hateful opinions he embraces every day.

Ben Shapiro promotes dangerous ideas that manifest themselves in extreme acts of violence, which can even be fatal. For example, on January 29, 2017, Alexandre Bissonnette shot up a mosque in Quebec City, killing six and injuring nineteen. Bissonnette's Twitter history revealed that he had frequently

visited Shapiro's profile, a profile which contains numerous Islamophobic tweets full of dangerous ideas, one of which I've already written out in this article. Here are some more, in case you weren't convinced yet: "Question: WHY is it in America's interest to have a Palestinian state? They promote terror, murder gays, hate America, and kill Jews." "Occupy Wall Street is just like the Arab Spring. Both are run by people who probably don't shower, hate American capitalism, and despise Israel." "So, who's looking forward to some good old-fashioned Arabs burning things and murdering Joos?" "There will be war tomorrow. Bet your bottom dollar. If UN passes, Arabs will begin murdering Jews. If not, Arabs will begin murdering Jews."

I hope that's been enough for you. These tweets are the kind of biased, violent, and dangerous content that Bissonnette had been constantly consuming before deciding to actually do something about what he perceived as the threat of Muslims in his community, turning to Shapiro's words and beliefs for guidance. Similarly, the Christchurch shooting and the El Paso shooting were the

results of radicalization by the online far-right movement, a movement of which Shapiro is a leading and active member. Shapiro has technically denounced the shooters, but there's no denying that a correlation definitely exists between his words and how others put them into action.

In conclusion, Ben Shapiro is a caricature and a talking head, but he presents a very serious danger to young people, especially the wealthy, melanin-deficient, and insulated community that we have at Cistercian. To members of the faculty, please stop promoting Shapiro as a resource or even as a moral teacher. Even with respect to abortion, maybe stick with people less likely to drop impressionable teenagers down a rabbithole of far-right propaganda and violence. To my Cistercian brethren, I beg that you please make a conscious effort to disavow Shapiro's brand of hate, since he simply hides these dangerous ideas behind



Photo By Gade Skidmore

what seems to be rationality to some. True intelligence is empathy, not hatred and violence. And for the love of God, please stop trying to get him to be a commencement speaker, it is just a terrible idea.

*The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Cistercian Informer.*

*Do you agree? Do you disagree? Do you want to respond? Come by an Informer meeting to talk to a Staff Member and see what you can do.*

*Let's start a conversation!*



Photo By J. Einstein

*Garbage Guru,  
who likes garbage.*

## Garbage Guru No.2

would've been fine with it if France just apologized for mixing up their countries. The French certainly apologized, but they apologized to Armenia, a country that had absolutely nothing to do with the incident. As one would say in French, "Lo siento!"

### ***A Man Broke Into Taylor Swift's Mansion, Took Off His Shoes, and Just Hung Out***

Sure, breaking into someone's house is a wrong thing to do and it's a huge invasion of privacy and it's a crime. But, on the other hand, he's probably more polite than some of the house-guests that I've had over. Is he dangerous? Probably. Was this a super weird thing to do? Yeah, that's a fair statement. Should he be arrested? I suppose. He broke her window and he broke the law. But, in his statement to the police, he says that he took off his shoes because he was taught that it was always polite to

take off your shoes when entering someone's house. He didn't have any weapons on him either, so police determined that he wasn't trying to harm anyone. It seems that he just really wanted to be friends with Taylor Swift, and the only way he thought that would happen is if Jake Peralta went to her house to hang out with her.

### ***NRA Complains that New Florida Law Will Take Away Rifles From... 10-Year-Old Girls***

"How do you tell a 10-year-old little girl who got a Ruger 10/22 with a pink stock for her birthday that her rifle is an assault weapon and she has to turn it over to the government or be arrested for felony possession?" asked Marion Hammer, a chief NRA lobbyist. And to that question, I legitimately have no answer. On the one hand, I would probably tell her "Hey, that's a gun, you're 10 years old, this is your birthday party, go play with your friends." On the other hand, I probably wouldn't give a 10-year-old girl an actual rifle for her birthday because that's a stupid thing to do. Putting aside the debate over

gun control, why would you give a 10-year-old a gun to keep and own? I mean, apparently this isn't self explanatory, but 5th graders shouldn't own guns! I would barely trust a 5th grader with an Airsoft gun, let alone an actual one. The NRA should probably step up their game in terms of "Coherent Arguments Against Gun Control."

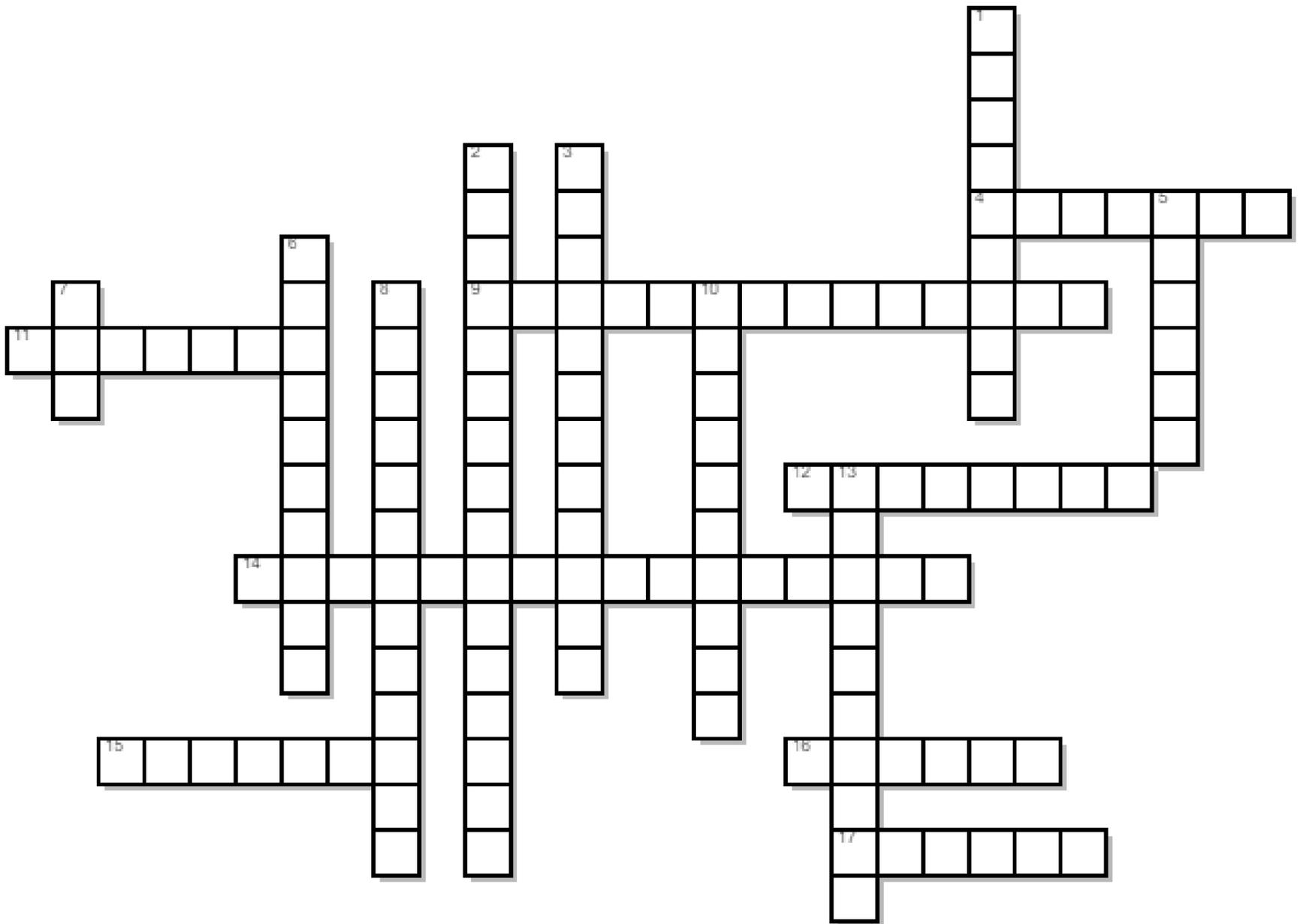
### ***President Trump Complained That Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs Make Him Look Orange***

I pity the staffer that has to tell President Trump that everyone thinks he looks orange because he is orange, not because he's in bad lighting. My real question is "What does the President think he looks like in normal lighting?" because if he thinks that only energy-efficient lighting makes him look orange, then other forms of light must make him look actually tanned? Right now, both sides of the political aisle need to come together in the national interest and show the President how to maintain a proper skincare routine, because his skin literally looks like the surface of a tangerine.

### ***The French Played the Wrong National Anthem***

This is a moment that could be ripped straight out of a sitcom. On September 7th, France played Albania in a soccer match. As is customary in these matches, they played the French national anthem, but instead of playing the Albanian national anthem, they played the Andorran national anthem. Apart from some profanity by the Albanian fans, it wasn't too big of a deal. Albania

# MEGA CROSSWORD



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**GOOD LUCK WITH ALL YOUR  
HOMECOMING FESTIVITIES THIS  
WEEKEND! LET'S GO HAWKS!**