

The dumber, the smarter

Here’s a rundown of the conversation I have every time I meet someone new.

Howdy there stranger, what’s your name?

Philip Smart. What’s yours?

Insert generic stranger name here. Oh, are you smart?

I usually throw out my best attempt at a witty response. I’ll say “on a good day” or “of course, or else I wouldn’t be named it.” Sometimes I’ll respond “nope.” That one’s usually the funniest.

But every time some one asks me that question, I start to think.

They always tell us here at school at some point in the year that we are “all very smart boys,” which is true.

Every student here is pretty freaking smart. Most of the time, at least.

And a lot of the time, we know it, and it goes to our heads. Straight to that big brain.

But I don’t think being smart is this concept where you have it or you don’t have it.

I don’t think it’s a binary system.

I think being smart is realizing that you’re dumb.

There are so many smart people (and a lot of dumb people) out there. Vik Pattabi ’15 told me there are so many “geniuses” he’s met in college at the start of this year.

And if you know Vik Pattabi, low-level genius-celebrity himself, that’s not to be taken lightly.

When you realize that there are so many smart people out there, you become smarter.

You take more risks. You aren’t worried about keeping that “I’m a smart person, so I can’t mess up or else people will know I’m not a smart person anymore” persona.

I’m not saying you should constantly tell yourself that you’re dumber than others.

That’s clearly not healthy. But you should be open to growth.

The Atlantic recently published an article entitled “100 percent is overrated,” and this growth-mindset is mentioned.

Being a smart person isn’t having a fixed mindset. It’s about being wrong.

I always end up learning the most when I fail.

Every time I mess up on tests, say the wrong thing at the wrong time or any other mistake, I end up learning more than I ever would have learned.

As students who constantly have that “smart-kid” label, we get caught up in retaining that label.

We are scared to go outside our comfort zone. We forget to take risks. We are worried that we might fail.

And when we’re not worried about keeping that smart kid label, we’re probably a bit more likeable

It’s not about being smart, it’s about growing smart.

PHILIP SMART



EDITORIAL

Don’t neglect core science structures with new building

With the construction of the new science building being planned out, teachers and students are looking forward to taking advantage of the new state-of-the-art facilities, including the new planetarium and greenhouse.

However, we’d like to point out that it seems as if we practically neglect the current greenhouse and planetarium facilities, which are still very useful even as they are growing older.

We are ecstatic that the school is putting these new facilities in to place, so we want ensure that we put them to good use.

Many students here go their entire St. Mark’s career with only a handful of visits — sometimes with years passing in between visits.

With such stellar facilities to be built, we feel that it’s important to do everything we can to incorporate those facilities into the curriculum as much as possible.

Whether that means adding specific trimester-long classes based in the planetarium and greenhouse or just taking more class periods to explore what they have to offer, we’d like to see at least a bit more exposure to the facilities whose construction will have had so much effort put into them.

The student body is excited to see the abundance of new opportunities the new building offers and hopes to take full advantage of them after the building’s completion.

Unsung hero



VERONICA PULIDO AND CASEY GENDASON COLLEGE COUNSELORS

Together in their dedicated wing of Hoffman, Pulido and Gendason walk juniors and seniors from SAT to acceptance.

The college application process is slowing down for seniors, but that does not stop the college counselors.

Right after the seniors finished their major Jan. 1 deadline, the two college counselors jumped right into their next cycle, helping members of the Junior Class begin their college process.

Needless to say, these two faculty members are very dedicated to the student body, assisting students whenever and however they possibly can.

We often hear stories of students emailing the counselors their college essays late into the night, only to receive a reply almost instantaneously, with edit suggestions and much-needed words of encouragement.

Veronica Pulido and Casey Gendason, we appreciate the work you do for us.

THE MATRIX

Our musings of happenings around campus condensed into single boxes

EXCITING

IMPORTANT

Room temperatures

Some Centennial rooms have become either unbearably cold or oppressively hot. Don't we get enough temperature extremes during chapel?

Five day weekend

Trading our late-start days for an extra day off may seem like a dubious exchange, but in the minds of many students, five days off trumps occasionally sleeping in for two hours.

Superfan men

Debuting the innovative iEasel, the Superfan men captivated the entire assembly audience with graphs, maps and statistics, keeping the entire Upper School in tune with the latest athletic news.

PSAT score delay

Already delaying the release past the typical December date, the College Board failed to deliver PSAT scores on their Jan. 7 date, to the frustration of many students.

ESD basketball game

With a unique gameplan for all students courtesy the Superfan men, the entire school is ready to watch the Lions win three straight.

Winter SPC

Soccer, basketball, wrestling and swimming teams will visit Houston to defend their prides and test their abilities.

Literary Festival

The annual festival refreshed the student body's cultural interest with National Geographic researchers and smash hit artists.

Of Mice and Men

Casting two newcomers to play George and Lenny provides an interesting take on the John Steinbeck classic.

Spring Fling

Finding a happy medium between a mixer and a ball is critical to keeping dances fun and entertaining.

SUPERSTITION | CARTOON WILL CLARK, GRAHAM KIRSTEIN

