

# Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Whether you've been here before or this is your very first time, hello and welcome to *The Tavern*! This is the first of many issues for the 2017-18 school year and I am excited to get the journey underway. My name is Amiri Tulloch – I am a senior from Phillips Academy Andover. I'm also the 2nd Editor-of-the-Chief of *The Tavern*, meaning I have the privilege of steering the thoughtpaper throughout this entire year in an attempt to build off the work of last year's trailblazing Editorial Board. This year, alongside a great group of editors, I'm excited to see what we can all do to develop *The Tavern*. We already have many ideas for how to improve and expand.

But, first, what exactly is *The Tavern*? We're a monthly, interscholastic "thoughtpaper" currently comprised of ten boarding schools from around the New England area. We characterize ourselves as a thoughtpaper, as opposed to a newspaper, because *The Tavern* is focused on providing a platform for students from the various schools to convene and publish thoughtful dialogue and opinion-based discourse about themes relating to the boarding school experience.

This month, our theme is "Discourse at Boarding School: How should students participate in productive discussions about polarizing issues?" The guiding question was inspired by the tumultuous summer of 2017; after so many important national and global events, it is crucial for us boarding school students to hold productive conversations on our campuses. After all, it is easy to become trapped in the notorious "boarding school bubble," where every moment is revolved around what's happening on campus. But, how can we break that bubble and participate in discussions about the significant events happening outside of boarding school?

Right now, we're experiencing a monumental moment in American society and global history. Personally, I'm confident that in 15-20 years, many of these recent moments – Trump's election and ensuing presidential status, the spate of devastating hurricanes, tension between President Trump and North Korea, Colin Kaepernick's protests, the Black Lives Matter movement, the publicizing of white supremacy and neo-nazism – will be immortalized in history books. But, in the midst of this whirlwind, *The Tavern*'s central question reemerges in various ways: how do we talk about this while at boarding school? How can we use our schools' resources to best facilitate these conversations? And, do we have a responsibility to participate in these discussions?

We answered some of these questions in this month's issue, but also hope that conversation extends far beyond *The Tavern*. Each of *The Tavern*'s school editors responded to the guiding question, offering a thoughtful article about their experiences with discourse. But, it is important to emphasize that these conversations don't just start and stop with *The Tavern*. We hope our issue contributes to ongoing dialogue as well as inspires new manifestations and understandings of conversation. Our role in discussion is vitally important to *The Tavern*, as we recognize that we are a venue from which to facilitate conversations. And, in light of this month's theme, it's

fair to say that the idea of discourse at boarding school resonates deeply with the mission of *The Tavern*. Our generation is growing up amidst a unique time, and so this issue – as well as all of *The Tavern*'s issues this coming year – will attempt to reflect and capture the perspective of boarding school students.

Before you go check out this month's articles, art, and literature, I just want to clearly state, as written in last year's welcome letter, that *The Tavern*'s Editorial Board and writers' individual thoughts do not represent any school or any singular school experience. We are individual student voices from these different schools, coming together and sharing ideas. The fact that many of our schools have officially endorsed *The Tavern* does not detract from this prior statement, as we are still independent and individual voices.

With that being said, welcome again to *The Tavern*! I hope you find our content thought-provoking and our ideas about boarding school discourse intriguing. Please continue these conversations wherever you may be – around your school, at home, in classes, at club meetings. Given the climate of today's world, these conversations are important. As always, thank you for stopping by *The Tavern*, and we hope you enjoy your stay.

Sincerely,  
Amiri Tulloch, Phillips Academy Andover '18  
Editor-in-Chief