

vanguard presents

COFFEE

How coffee stops time

Freya Patel, STAFF WRITER

My family has always loved coffee. To me, their love for coffee felt religious. Two cups a day, morning and afternoon, always warmed to the same temperature. Maybe evening as well, if it was decaf. They had ground coffee stuffed in bags, boxes, tin cans, and whatever else functioned as a container. It was barbaric. We needed an entire cupboard suited with four shelves just to store all their coffee. And yet, despite the excess of coffee at their disposal, they went to coffee shops almost every day.

I never understood why they liked coffee. The smell of coffee wasn't even that great, it made you feel all jittery afterward, and it always made my stomach hurt with just one sip. My mom and sister took an eternity to finish their drinks, too — it was never a “quick stop.” I understood that coffee shops have a comforting environment, but that's not what they went for; they went to chug down their daily doses of caffeine. Why would you get so excited seeing a shop dedicated to cups of bitter water when you could have the same thing at home?

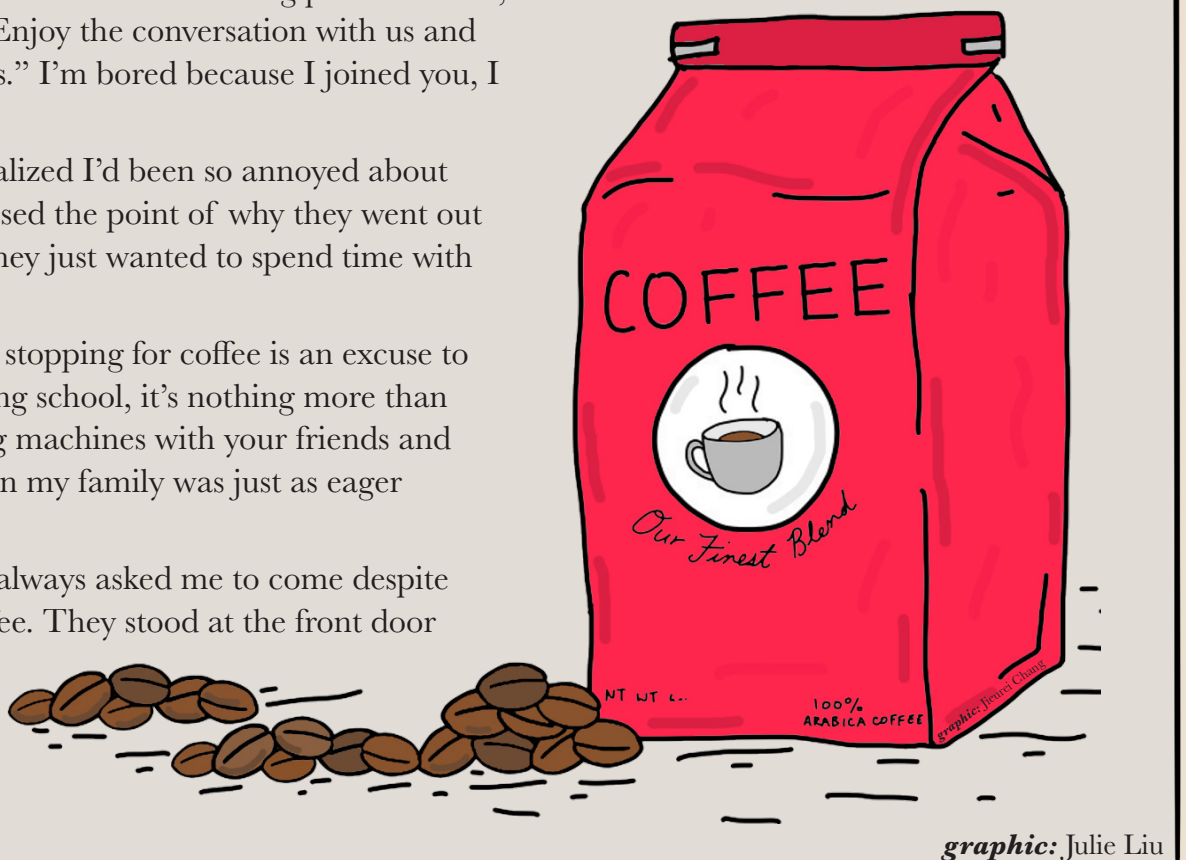
I would tell them about cutting down their coffee intake, because surely it wasn't healthy, but they'd both flap their hands at me like that was the stupidest thing they'd ever heard before going back to their caffeinated chatter. I was forced to sit in those coffee shops for at least an hour every time while they talked over their piping hot cups. And when I would finally reach my breaking point, I'd tug at my mom's jacket and ask her if we could leave because I was so bored.

One time, presumably when my mom had reached her breaking point with me, she'd turned to me and said, “Freya, quit it! Enjoy the conversation with us and stop nagging me! If you're bored then join us.” I'm bored because I joined you, I thought. But I was wrong.

The longer I'd dwelled on it, the more I realized I'd been so annoyed about their stupid obsession with coffee that I'd missed the point of why they went out to get it at all. It should've been obvious — they just wanted to spend time with each other.

Among our busy days and tight schedules, stopping for coffee is an excuse to relax and mingle with those around us. During school, it's nothing more than a justified means to loiter around the vending machines with your friends and discuss each other's lives. I should have known my family was just as eager spend time together as the rest of the world.

I should have known, especially since they always asked me to come despite how many times I told them I didn't like coffee. They stood at the front door looking at me, waiting for an answer, hoping to just spend some time with me. ■



graphic: Julie Liu

The best coffee in town, according to students

Compiled by **Sophie Miller**, VANGUARD CO-EDITOR



graphic: Jieurei Chang

“My favorite place is Small World because it's just the best. I order a London Fog. They also have really great ginger molasses cookies. It's the least artificial, and the energy and the vibes are always great.”

Davita Wrone '23

“I don't love coffee, but I really like Junbi. They don't just have coffee, so if I'm not in the mood there are lots of other drinks to try. I really like the peach lemonade matcha with boba when I'm there.”

Isabel Wong '23

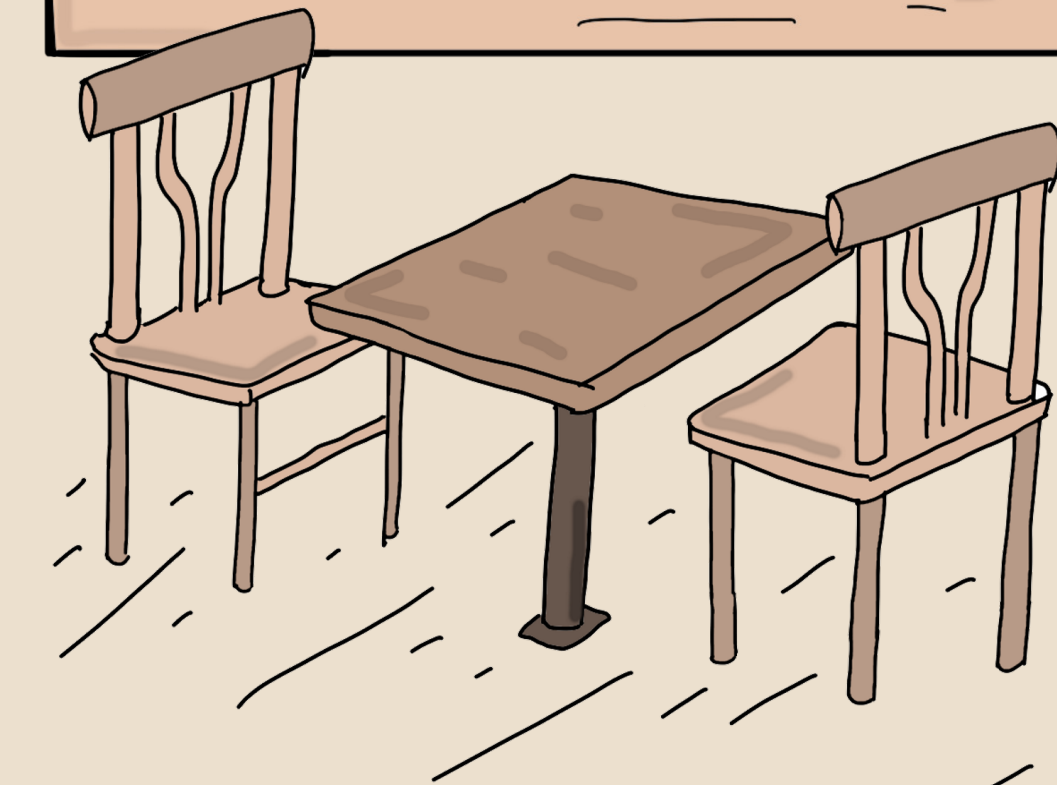
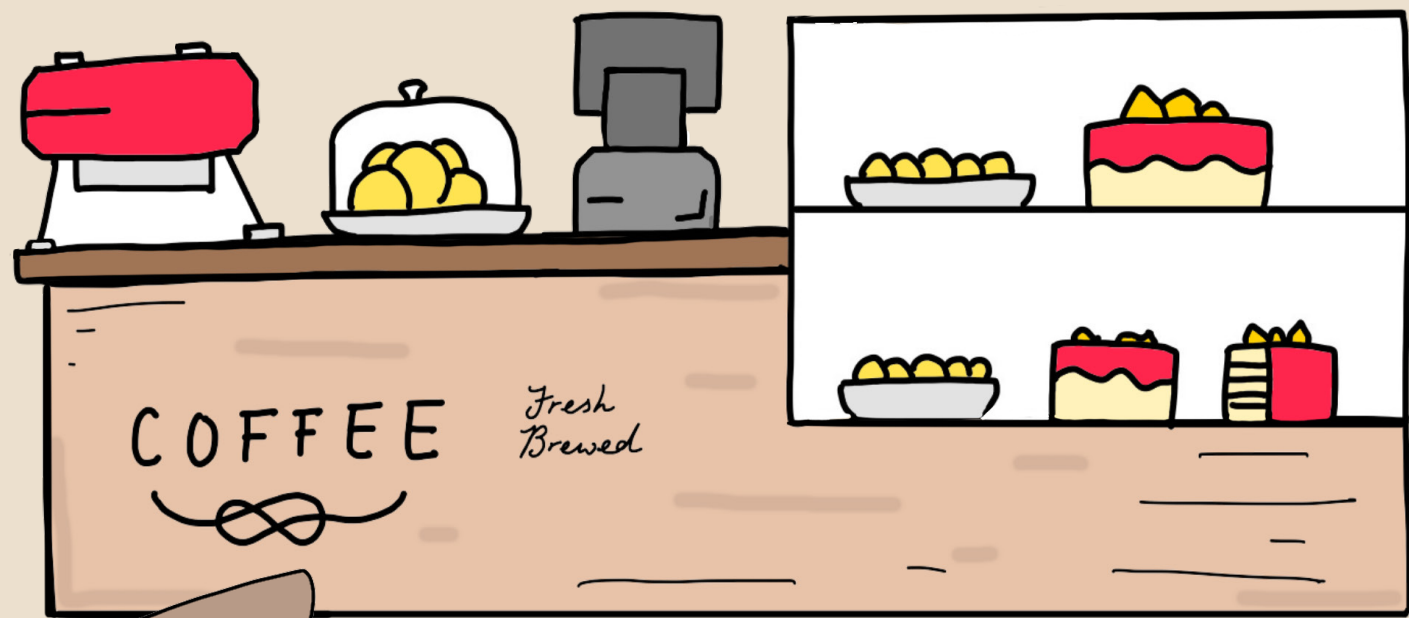
“Starbucks is my favorite place in town for coffee. I like the cold brew they have because I don't really care for the bells and whistles; it's the best because the cold brew there is only about two dollars.”

David Yang '22

Coffee fuels bad habits

Kristina Sarkisova and Wa Fan, STAFF WRITERS

Students at PHS have a sleeping problem — it’s all too common to hear classmates bragging about staying up until the early morning doing homework or lamenting how they were caught napping in classes. There’s even an Instagram account of PHS students sleeping in class. Whether it’s due to poor time management, an excess of homework, or other commitments, it seems unlikely that the majority of students are getting their full recommended eight to ten hours, especially as we slowly approach exam season. So how are students coping with their workload? To stay awake and pay attention in class, many have turned to coffee. Instead of being a boost for those one or two all-nighters, it has spiraled into PHS’s unhealthiest habit.



graphic: Jieurei Chang

no time on activities that don’t further this goal. Students have begun to see sleep as being “unproductive,” instead consuming unsustainable amounts of caffeine to gain more time to work and all the while not realizing the stress they put their bodies under. It’s easy to lose perspective when we’re young adults with lots of energy; these habits, however, worsen with age, and they’re also harder to shake the longer we continue.

And unlike some other habits, caffeine is addictive. Many times, students will wake up the next morning, still sleep deprived, leading them to grab yet another cup of coffee, continuing the cycle of dependency. Forgetting to drink coffee, on the other hand, can lead to headaches and drowsiness during the day.

“I nap during the day and do work at night because I feel more productive at night and have a headache all day if I don’t drink coffee,” said Maya Lerman ’23, a daily coffee drinker.

These symptoms aren’t tricks of the imagination, either. According to the Institute for Scientific Information on Coffee, a subset of the population suffers withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, reduced alertness, and drowsiness, explaining many students’ experiences of insomnia and anxiety when reducing their previously large caffeine intake.

Ironically, drinking coffee can quickly turn into a damper on students’ capabilities, ranging from academic to social obligations since they are

using it to avoid sleep. Clearly, caffeine’s short-term benefits do not outweigh all the damage it imposes on students’ health. Ultimately, the high-pressure academic environment of PHS (no doubt created and propagated by students) entangles us in a vicious cycle of stress that leads to these strenuous amounts of work at night. Nevertheless, students can take action to lead healthier lifestyles that will benefit their academic performance and health in the long run. Avoiding reliance on substances like caffeine, adopting a schedule, avoiding procrastination, practicing self-care, and even (controversial as it may be) cutting down on workloads are all ways to remain on top of academic responsibilities while maintaining personal health. While it’s impossible to find a one-size-fits-all strategy, we need to embrace a different culture as a school and prioritize our well-being, beginning with something as simple as our choice of morning drink. ■



graphic: Jieurei Chang

A brief history of coffee Andrew Zhao, VANGUARD CO-EDITOR

<p>9th Century</p> <p>According to legend, coffee was discovered by an Ethiopian herder who noticed strange behavior among his goats after they ate coffee plants.</p>	<p>1607</p> <p>Captain John Smith, one of the founders of the Jamestown colony, brings coffee to North America.</p>	<p>1773</p> <p>During the American boycott of British tea, it was considered patriotic to drink coffee, which developed the American coffee culture.</p>	<p>1971</p> <p>Jerry Baldwin, Zev Siegl, and Gordon Bowker open Starbucks in Seattle, Washington.</p>	<p>2019</p> <p>The Coffee Club, a coffee shop staffed entirely by students, opens at Princeton University.</p>
<p>1538</p> <p>Ottoman Turks export coffee beans from Mocha, Yemen, hence the name for a type of coffee, “mocha.”</p>	<p>1710</p> <p>The French invent infusion brewing by pouring hot water through grounds, as opposed to boiling.</p>	<p>1943-1945</p> <p>During WWII, American soldiers in Italy diluted Italian espresso with water, thus creating the Americano.</p>	<p>1993</p> <p>Jessica Durrie and Brant Cosaboom found Small World Coffee in Princeton, New Jersey.</p>	

graphic: Jieurei Chang

Life through the lens of Small World Coffee

Sophie Miller, VANGUARD CO-EDITOR

Having lived in Princeton since I was three, my mom used to take me to Small World Coffee on the way to preschool. She would order a caramel cappuccino, but I found her drink of choice absolutely repulsive. Still, I wanted to try it every time, even though my response was always the same expression of disgust.

By eighth grade, a lot of my friends were drinking coffee on the regular. I didn’t understand it — I still despised the taste of coffee. But oftentimes to humor them, I’d sit in Small World with them after school while they sipped their coffees. Despite not ordering myself, I still enjoyed sitting in Small World and chatting with them about school and dropping inside jokes any chance I got.

Junior year of high school changed it all. The workload of four Advanced Placement classes turned out to be a lot more than I had anticipated. My leisurely afternoons turned into homework until 1:00 a.m. and running consistently on five hours of sleep. I felt exhausted all the time, and my extreme procrastination habits certainly didn’t help. After waking up at 5:00 a.m. one

day to finish a math assignment, I’d had enough. I choked down some of my mom’s homemade French roast coffee. I still hated it, but that was a day where I could actually remain awake in class. The more days I drank it, the more coffee grew on me.

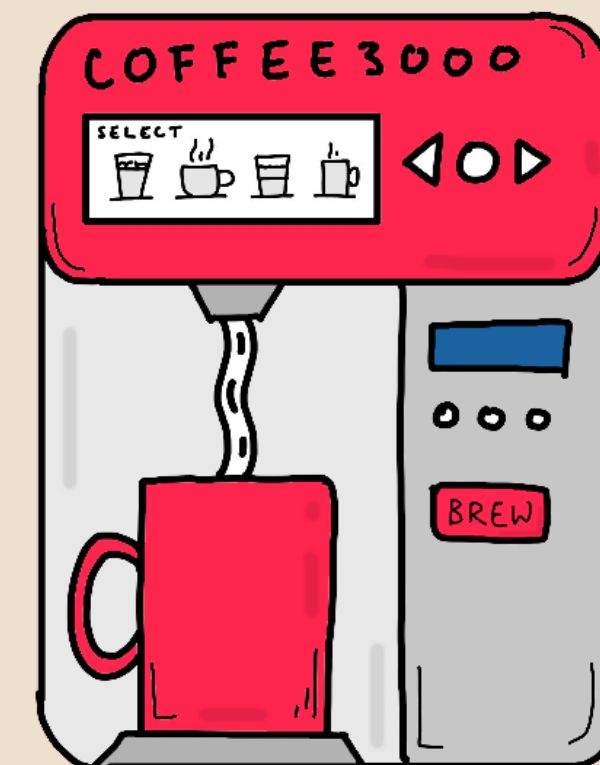
I reached a point in October where I knew my procrastination methods had to be changed to maintain my sanity. That often turned into homework at coffee shops; getting out of the house always kept me more focused, and at this point, coffee had become a necessity for me to stay awake. I had grown a taste for a single-shot cappuccino at Small World, so I’d order my drink and proceed to spend hours sitting at the table poring over textbooks and making flashcards. The wooden and red theme plus the mosaic art on the walls plus the quiet background indie music made for a cozy study spot, and I was finally beginning to understand the endearment of coffee shops.

All of this homework meant my social life had become lacking. One day, however, I ran into a friend who was also doing homework at Small World. We sat together in a corner and did our work while chatting every so often. I

went home happy and fulfilled for the first time in months, reminded of afternoons when I was younger where I’d spend the afternoons sipping hot chocolate.

I started asking people I met in class and some old friends if they wanted to come study with me at Small World on Wednesday afternoons. It was within walking distance from school — oftentimes my biggest selling point. This always ended in a lovely afternoon of chatting and working on assignments together. Eventually, a quick coffee date became my optimal afternoon for both my schoolwork and my social life.

My junior year afternoons at Small World may have greatly disrupted my sleep schedule beyond repair, but they also created a way for me to balance my social and academic life. In fact, afternoons at Small World were always the best way to bond with my friends. I’d always had the best conversations in the corner of Small World Coffee. Although coffee may be the downfall for many, my obsession has helped me keep my life balanced. ■



graphic: Jieurei Chang