

A Controversial Controversy

Maggie Duus
Sports and Features Editor

I came to Greenwich Academy mid-way through sophomore year with the announcement that no, I would not go to college. I would, instead, attend a culinary school as Audrey Hepburn did in the movie *Sabrina*. My announcement automatically differentiated me from my hard-working and talented class. I was, in the context of college-oriented students, the biggest controversy-seeking misfit.

Now, as I procrastinate filling out another long and tedious application to such-and-such college, I look back and smile at my childish musings, wishing for that openness to possibilities that defined me then. That thought, differing greatly from both GA's and the Duus family's norm, offered a priceless freedom from conformity. People came to know me as the "freak" who wouldn't go to college, and I knew that they knew that there actually was a Maggie Duus.

In striving to be heard and seen, we will say and do numerous things that are controversial. Controversy provokes acknowledgement and engagement, which is why we inevitably go to school, learn new things, and come out as new people. I wanted to be a chef, but I went to school, and now I want to be a business person. Ta da!

Instead of seeming shallow and money driven, let me clarify my controversial "back-step" journey. We go to school to learn how to think. In this process we are challenged and torn until

our brains are so weary that we just want that right answer and the "A" at the top of our paper. It is a brutal war called high school that every student must go through. Things--life--become black and white as success gets narrowly defined with mindless letters.

GA, of course, does not want this, demanding instead that we build our characters on moral pillars above let-

"I don't want to just step into a mold. I want to be different."

ter grades. So while trying to be moral stalwarts and over-achievers, we still must try to find our individuality. Here is where controversy steps in. The difference of opinions creates individuals out of our "strong and confident young women." Therefore, we should, theoretically, be able to say or do whatever we want in these contexts.

With this said, however, GA's, and I figure even Greenwich's, immense desire for political correctness and "niceness" inevitably limits our ability to express ourselves and therefore suppresses "black and white" controversy like "I hate you because you wear polka dots to school." Instead it is encouraged we keep these "inappropriate" thoughts to ourselves because they might be damaging to others.

We have barriers such as the Honor

Board, infractions, and even quick quips of the lip to prevent us from screaming out our thoughts. If we say or do whatever controversial desire comes into our heart, people will get hurt. Therefore, with our most pleasurable or malicious desires restricted from us, a main controversy for the day may be why so-and-so wore a cape to school instead of the common fleece. Controversy has become pathetic.

I see this most often in debate club on Tuesday nights, which by the way y'all should stop by and try out.

Debates concerning abortion or cheating, for example, always end with the same "right" conclusion. People chime in saying "I know that this is wrong but..." Do we need the "wrong but..." clause to introduce controversy in this environment? No! Your idea may be wrong given the circumstances set by surrounding society, but then give new circumstances and new evidence to back up your opinions. Do not, whatever you do, slump down behind thought's barriers. Strut your controversial thoughts!

I enjoy arguing and being controversial. Yes--I am a Republican. Usually the word Republican in an oxymoron to controversy, but in today's society with abortion and gay rights I take the underdog side--the Republican side in this school--and see what happens. The argument goes like this:

Me -- So I think I'm pro life.
Random person -- That's stupid
Me -- Why?
Random person -- Because what about woman's rights?

Me -- Yes -- every infant girl has a right to live!

Random person raises eyebrows and thinks I'm a nut.

This is what I like about controversy. It has to end somewhere -- sometimes not as great a spot as other times, as this particular argument can go around in circles. But still. Think about it -- controversy provokes new thought. I have argued this argument so much that I've grown tired with my side of it, rethought it, and now I'm pro choice. It's nice knowing that it's not a definite black and white commodity like "A's". Instead, controversy is malleable communication.

I sometimes wonder if I'm not arguing because I'm a Republican or a theologian but because I'm a lover of arguments. I like to hear other people's thoughts -- riled up and angry.

Is that controversial? To argue for the argument's sake? I feel there's a sheer lack of genuineness behind most controversy. I'm bored of what I think and do. I grew bored of saying "I'm going to culinary school!" There was no real reason behind such thinking except that Audrey Hepburn is amazing and everyone should want to be like her. Instead, I'm just a malleable being waiting for purpose. I don't want to just step into a mold. I want to be different. Therefore, controversy suits me.

Homework: How Much Is Too Much?

Kate Preziosi
Junior Editor

The week before exams is universally known as crunch time: the week to get organized and start studying...if we had the time. With all the tests, quizzes, essays and labs squeezed into the last week of second quarter, it's a wonder any of us had time to breathe. Although this frenzied, half-awake state of mind is especially intense during exam time, it seems as though the students of Greenwich Academy and Brunswick feel this kind of pressure for a good amount of the school year.

Personally, I do about three to four hours of homework a night. I have a friend in Trumbull High School who tells me she has a half an hour a night and rarely exceeds the one hour limit. Are we really *that* extreme?

One issue is that often a teacher will consistently assign a ridiculous amount of reading just when your science teacher pounds on the practice problems.

Is homework distributed evenly among the departments? Head of the Upper School, Mrs. Sharon Dietzel, found that a difficult question to answer. "Yes and no. Sometimes it depends on the individual teacher within the department. I have found that there are periods of heavy and light work in each subject, and while they may seem overwhelming at times, the amount of work done ends up fairly equal by the end of the year."

Is there a limit? Can you tell your teacher that the amount of homework is exceeding x amount of hours, and you can't get to it all? The Greenwich Academy Handbook says that "students should

expect two to three hours of homework per night."

But statistics show that the average teenager spends more time in front of the television than doing any other activity besides sleeping. So while

you think you've done three hours of studying, what you might not take into account is that you took a half an hour

for dinner and a late night viewing of "The Real World" in between.

So how do we compare to other high schools homework wise? One girl from Deerfield Academy said "I have so much more now than I did when I went to day school. I usually start at 7:00 and finish around 11:00-12:00, depending on the night." Another boy from St. Paul's School noted, "My

amount of homework varies with the night, but on a given night I can have anywhere between one to five hours of

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Academy Alumnae Take on the World

Jill Mastoloni '88

Do you ever think about what happens after high school? Where you'll be in 20 years and how you'll get there? Do you ever look at faces in old yearbooks and wonder where the girls you see are now? GAP talked to 6 GA alumnae about their lives since graduation. Here is the first installment of these interviews - look for three more in our April issue.

On January 31, towards the end of a busy day of work at Amaranth, LLC, Ms. Mastoloni took a moment to tell GAP about how she stumbled into the field of finance, what she loves about her job, and why she has no regrets about her life since leaving GA.

What have you been up to since graduating from GA?

I went to Cornell University and majored in business. I started working for Morgan Stanley on Wall Street a couple of days after I graduated. I went into the hedge fund industry in 1997.

Is that where you are now?
Yes. I work for a firm called Amaranth Advisors. It's a multi-strategy fund, and I'm responsible for assisting in picking technology stocks for the portfolio manager and trader.

Did you always want to study business?

No, I didn't. I originally graduated from GA thinking I wanted to become a veterinarian and went to Cornell with an undergraduate major in veterinary technology. I realized after the first semester that really wasn't what I wanted to do. I did very well in finance and financial accounting so I went that route at Cornell. I really enjoyed the stock market--the excitement of trading and picking stocks -- so I decided to become an analyst.

Larissa James '91

On Saturday, February 12, GAP spoke to Larissa James, who shared details of her job at Hybrid Films.

What does your job entail?

Right now I'm the coordinating producer for Hybrid Films, in Greenwich Village. We're a TV. production company. We produce *Dog the Bounty Hunter* and *Family Plots* for A&E. As a coordinating producer I do a lot of the pre-production work and organizing and coordinating.

In *Dog* we follow a real-life bounty hunter, and we go out with him when he brings down fugitives in Hawaii. He does his job as we film it. It's a family and the whole family is over the top and has a huge personality so we get a lot of family drama and day-to-day activity.

Family Plots is the same thing except it's based around the funeral home. We need to have releases so I have to make sure the place gives us permission and everyone who is filmed signs releases. The hours and hours of footage have to be whittled down to a thirty-minute show. The last couple of years I've also worked on the network side. I was a coordinator for the SciFi Channel and USA network.

What led you to your career?

When I was in college I was a Theater and Psychology major. I put off all my science classes until the end. I did Theater at Greenwich Academy. At Vanderbilt, I was the president of the Theater Club. I was sitting in an Art History class one day and my teacher was looking at the historical context of each picture, and I thought that was fascinating. Before there was T.V., before there was film, people were exploring their

What were you involved with at GA?

I played field hockey and lacrosse-- I was big into sports. Now, I try to run whenever I can and stay in shape, but sometimes the business doesn't really allow you to do that.

Do you think GA has changed much since your years here?

I think that's tough to answer because I've changed a lot, so it's tough for me to see what I was like and compare myself to the average students there. I do think the school has changed from a cosmetic standpoint with the building of the new Upper School, but it's also changed positively in that it's tried to become more diverse. But it's good to see the same old faces when you go back and the same old teachers, like Mrs. Cragin and Mrs. Dixon. It's comforting to see that some of the best teachers are still there.

Do you wish that you'd known some of the things you know now when you graduated?

No. I think that finding things out through trial and error is always the best way to experience life. I really enjoyed my career at Cornell and what I've done so far. I've enjoyed both the plusses and minuses because through those minuses I learned a lot about myself so I could move forward.

world though their art. So I wanted to do that with Theater.

I dropped out of Psychology, and I came up with an interdisciplinary major that looked at American Theater. *The Crucible* draws huge parallels to McCarthyism. He had something to say about the Red Scare but he didn't want to address it directly so he did a parallel story line.

You were involved in theater at GA?

I was in a lot of the plays with Mr. Moraske and the musicals. The theater department is a big deal now. It's worlds away from when I was there. When I was there, there was the fall play and the spring play and a little drama club. I think it's celebrated more and students are exploring it more. There wasn't a lot of involvement with the outside community.

What did you learn at the Academy?

Being able to pull from different aspects of my life and being well-rounded and understand that one part of your personality relates to another. Academics and arts, and sports and community service, you need to work on all these areas. Everything is entwined.

Any advice for filmmakers?

It's a difficult industry. My advice would be to make sure it's what you want to do. If you decide that's what you want to do, find an area you want to specialize in and learn as much about that area as you can, and that will pay off in the end.

What's your favorite TV show?

I think *24* is great. As a storyteller and someone who works with T.V., I love to see how they connect the different threads and how they're interwoven.

Gaylyn Boone '61

GAP spoke to Gaylyn Boone, on Saturday, January 29. From her San Diego, California home, she reflected on her unusual career, which included a stint at a dude ranch, eight years as an immigration lawyer and much more. Mrs. Boone also shared some memories from her years at the Academy.

What did you do after graduating from GA?

I went to Vassar College and graduated in 1965. I took the summer off to drive out West with a couple of friends. The trip fell apart, and I ended up working at a dude ranch in Wyoming for the summer. When I came home, I got a job at Bloomingdale's. I got interested in the store through a Vassar alumna. I worked there for a year and found out that merchandising and retailing was not my thing, so I moved down to Washington, D.C. and went to work for the federal government.

What part of the government?

I worked for a program called the Office of Economic Opportunity, which was started under the Lyndon Johnson administration. While I was working at that agency I went to law school at the University of San Francisco. I'd moved from Washington to California, so I was attending night classes there. While in

That must have been an interesting job.

It was fascinating. We had small one-half-day or one-day trials and the government put on evidence and the respondent (the person being set up deportation) put on evidence, and we'd have an interpreter in the respondent's language. After eight years, I had an opportunity to apply for an immigration judge's job, so in 1995 I became an immigration judge, and I transferred once again to San Diego, where I live now. I worked in the immigration court with nine other judges until I retired a year ago.

It must have been difficult to decide people's futures as a judge.

Yes, it is a difficult job. When I was a prosecutor, I only had to present the government's position. I had to anticipate what the other side would do, but I only had to look at the evidence from one side. But when you're a judge you have to weigh the evidence from both sides--the government's and the respondent's. You have to decide which side has presented the best evidence to make their case. So it's harder being in the middle and making a decision based on everything in the case.

Have you been back to visit GA? Is it very different from the years when

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law school, I moved back to Washington and took my last year of courses at two D.C. universities.

What made you leave the Office of Economic Opportunity?

The Anti Poverty Program in the Office of Economic Opportunity was closed by Congress and President Reagan in 1981. I was out of work for a year looking for a job in D.C. After a year I found a job with the U.S. Department of Justice.

What did you do for the Department of Justice?

I worked in the Equal Employment Opportunity program, which made sure that the employees of the Justice Department were treated fairly by the Department's leadership. After I worked for them for five years, I had an opportunity to practice immigration law, which I got interested in because my husband had worked for the immigration service for many years. I became a trial attorney, doing prosecutions for deportations for people who had come to the U.S. illegally from other countries.

you went to school here?

I have, but mostly just for reunions. It's definitely changed. When I went to school the campus was still down on the Old Campus that now belongs to Brunswick. The school was a beautiful old brick building. The most distinctive thing I remember about it was this fantastic study hall on the third floor. It had glass walls on three sides so you could see outdoors at the same time you were studying.

But that's all gone now -- the school has expanded quite a bit. When I was there I think there were 350 students and now there are over 700. And you have that beautiful campus.

What do you know now that you wish you'd known when you graduated from GA?

You learn as you go through life that it's a good idea to be flexible and to accept change. I think the Academy prepared me to be open, to deal with change. It was a good place to get a great foundation for college and going out into the world. I didn't really know it at the time, but I know it now.

Interviews by Katie Semida and Claire Kiechel