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A Tale of Three Dots: Letter from the (Graduating) Editor

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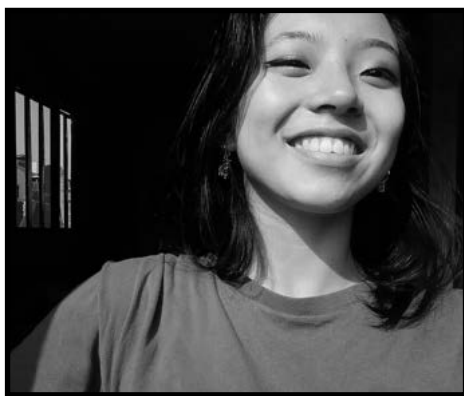
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A Tale of Three Dots

Letter from the (Graduating) Editor

I learned about The Synapse during my first semester at Oberlin. Tara Santora, then Editor-in-Chief, stood in front of my introductory biology class explaining the magazine with a poster projected behind them. The magazine's old logo comprised of "THE SYNAPSE," written out, with three red dots connecting the Y to the P. Those tiny red dots hung mysteriously from the logo. I wondered: what do those dots mean? Why are they there? Of course, I never had the forethought to actually ask the Editors-in-Chief to explain the meaning underlying them. I figured I could always ask later. Then, suddenly, in my second year of college, I became the Editor-in-Chief without a clue as to what those dots meant.

That year, we completely redesigned the magazine. During that period of change, I discovered I was not the only one who found the dots intriguing; the whole board leaned into our dot theme. Pull quotes were adorned with dots instead of lines. Our discipline headings were rounded instead of boxes. We even adjusted our logo so that three giant red dots prominently sat in the middle of

the A. Yet, the board never discussed their significance. It was from our smallest and most controversial change that I determined the meaning of the dots.

During a cold evening in February 2019, the members of the board sat in a heated debate: should each article end with one dot or three? Historically, a single dot indicated the end of an article, as is customary in magazines. With the new aesthetic, though, the board decided that the single dot felt out of place. We swapped in the new-end-of-article signifier, which you can see closing every article in this issue. I did not initially agree with the change, firmly residing in the pro-single-dot camp. The dots reminded me of the ominous "To be continued..." at the end of shows and movies. However, I realized that was precisely the point.

Science is continuous. While the writer may have finished their thoughts, there is always more that will be discovered. Each article is embedded in an ever-growing web of information. The dots represent the connection to the current literature and to the research that is to come. In many ways, The Synapse holds this place for me. While my time as Editor-in-Chief of this incredible magazine is coming to an end, the stories, friends, and lessons I have learned will stick with me for many years. ●●●