

# OPINION | The Meaning of Winter

## Remember, Maine is yours too.

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What does it mean for winter to arrive? It definitely means more snow, colder temperatures, and darkness in the afternoon, and for many it means happiness levels decrease slightly. It happens every year, and somehow it still surprises me. I always end up asking that question: Why am I so sad? Though it might seem like something insignificant, the question is one that should be seriously investigated. I genuinely do like the snow, as it never sticks where I'm from. I don't mind the cold weather, unless it's unbearable. Why am I so sad when the winter comes around?

Thinking back to prior years at Bates, winter has always been something of a warning for me. Warning: Finals are coming. Warning: New Semester with new classes. I think having a three-week break definitely helps with the winter sadness, but then it comes back once I return to Campus. Here's what I believe happens. Winter is a very long season. The first snow is always the best. It's new, and it makes Campus look like this magical winter Wonderland. Then it melts. It might get warmer for a day, and then slowly the cold temperatures return and so does the snow; over and over and over again. We see this process occur so many times throughout the winter, and eventually it gets old to the point where we're just wishing for the Spring to beat the odds of nature and arrive sooner than it's meant to. As this happens, so does school, and repeating the first semester again, beginning with the class introductions, then the first assignment, midterms, second midterms, final, and for some of us, thesis. Two borderline boring and stressful things



Willa Wang

Maine, although cold, has a special beauty in the winter, too.

happening simultaneously, it takes a toll on our mind. Suddenly, it feels like there is nothing to look forward to, ever, but I'm here to remind you that though it's early, Spring is coming, so here's something you can do in the meantime: self-care.

The meaning of winter for me, is self-care season. Do the things that you know make you happy. Any hobby, I mean it. If you enjoy arts and crafts, create a long project that you have to come back to every day, and that'll give you something to be excited about. If you're more of a visual person, give yourself time every week to enjoy a movie. Harry Potter is very much a marathon for the winter, and if you're not a fan of that, pick something that you are a fan of, and watch it, seriously. If you're a writer, write a book, or a collection of poems or whatever makes you feel alive. Physically self-care; set time aside for you to run through your entire skin-care routine, and do a face mask, and take a long shower. Do something, allow yourself to be excited about something every week, and give yourself the time, put it into your schedule. You might not know it, but it's going to help you tremendously, but also keep in mind that it isn't going to solve all of your problems. There might be a day where you simply can not take it, and that's okay. The important thing is to take care of yourself and do whatever it is that you need to do to make sure that you're okay. It could be everything I mentioned, or anything else I didn't. As winter makes Maine its home, remember that Maine is yours too.