

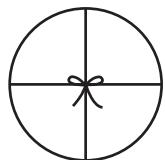
# UNCOVER THE MARK

MENLO-ATHERTON HIGH SCHOOL 555 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD, ATHERTON CA VOLUME IX ISSUE II DECEMBER 2017

p. 14-22

# The Mark

## December 2017



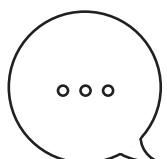
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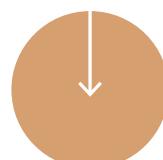
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*In Loving Memory of Matthew Cruz, Ricardo Torres & Andrew Gonzales*

### Policy

The Mark, a feature magazine published by the students in Menlo-Atherton's journalism class, is an open forum for student expression and the discussion of issues of concern to its readership. The Mark is distributed to its readers and students at no cost. The staff welcomes letters to the editor, but reserves the right to edit all submissions for length, grammar, potential libel, invasion of privacy, and obscenity. Submissions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all M-A students or the staff of The Mark. Send all submissions to [submittothemark@gmail.com](mailto:submittothemark@gmail.com)

### About the Cover

In this issue of The Mark, we explore the hypocrisies present in our society that influence our daily lives. Designed by our Editors-in-Chief, Sofia and Lara Karadogan, the wrapped gift on the cover represents the societal issues that are often neglected or hidden away. However, upon opening the magazine, you take the first step in unraveling the truth. Inspired by the "Me Too" movement, The Mark staff believes in the need to shed light on controversy and pursue justice. Beginning with this issue's cover package, we hope to work together with the M-A community to create change.

# Editorial

## Freedom or Security?

On Oct. 31, Congress questioned executives from Google, Facebook and Twitter over Russia's involvement in the 2016 U.S. election and their use of social media platforms to further the Russian agenda. The American democracy is based on the intrinsic principle that the government is by the people and for the people of the U.S.. Yet Russian influence in this past election may have undermined the electorate's decisions, and therefore, the basic woodwork of our democracy. The discovery that American voters were targeted and misinformed by Russian entities is concerning, especially in the midst of the upcoming 2018 midterm elections. The widespread concern has led to serious consideration of regulation of social media, which could subsequently encroach on another value of our democracy: free speech.

Official Facebook estimates show that Russian-backed posts reached 126 million Americans between June 2015 and August 2017, throughout the presidential election. This is roughly half of the entire U.S. voting population whose opinions may have been impacted by Russian influence.

Facebook General Counsel Colin Stretch explains that

most of the advertisements "focus on divisive social and political messages across the ideological spectrum, touching on topics from LGBT matters to race issues to immigration to gun rights," and many of them are based in falsehood or are blatant lies. However, when using social media, it's often difficult to identify legitimate news sources, and as a result, many Americans fell into this trap.

Google, Facebook and Twitter have all begun to take independent initiative to prevent foreign influence on their respective platforms as they rightfully should be; they are responsible for user security and vulnerabilities to political manipulation. While this is a step in the right direction, the fate of future elections cannot be left up to the word of the Silicon Valley conglomerates. Congress is also working to establish a series of regulations to help prevent similar events in the future. So far, Congress has proposed the Honest Ads Act which would require internet companies to keep copies of political ads, related to both candidates and issues, and make them available to the public. While this will increase transparency of who sponsors political ads, the problem of fake social media accounts still poses

a significant threat, and has brought up discussion of regulating social media accounts and posts.

Many Russian based social media accounts post false, divisive information on Facebook and Twitter. For example, the Russian-backed twitter account @TEN\_GOP falsely posed as the Tennessee Republican Party and amassed 150,000 followers who routinely saw their racist, divisive posts; even the then-Presidential candidate Donald Trump retweeted one of their posts. When it comes to accounts like @TEN\_GOP and other Russian influenced accounts, many are calling for increased regulations and the ability to edit or delete these accounts.

However, as social media is an extension of free speech, is regulation of social media an infringement of our first amendment right to free speech? This dilemma emphasizes the delicate balance between freedom and security necessary in proper governance. There is no doubt that Russian meddling in elections should not be allowed, but we must also be careful not to let fear generate policy, allowing the government to infringe upon our rights of free speech and expression. Though it may now be practical to

delete Russian social media accounts that may have influenced the U.S. election, setting a precedent of government control of social media may prove costly to our rights to free speech in the long term.

However, to point fingers at Silicon Valley giants is using them as somewhat of a scapegoat; they aren't all to blame. The average American citizen is also shares responsibility for the Russian influence, as it is the individual's duty to make informed decisions. One cannot take the information they see on social media at face value. Facebook and Twitter aren't news sources. To quote Thomas Jefferson, "an educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people." So, while Russian influence is encroaching on the sanctity of our democracy, so is the naivety of the electorate.

While there is no one way to deal with political meddling in future elections, it is vital that change begins with the people. The distinctiveness of American democracy rests in the electorate's ability to enact change. For American citizens, the ability to decide who will lead our country is both a privilege and a responsibility.

by the Editorial Board

## High Mark

Canned food shuffle

Second semester fresh start

End of football season

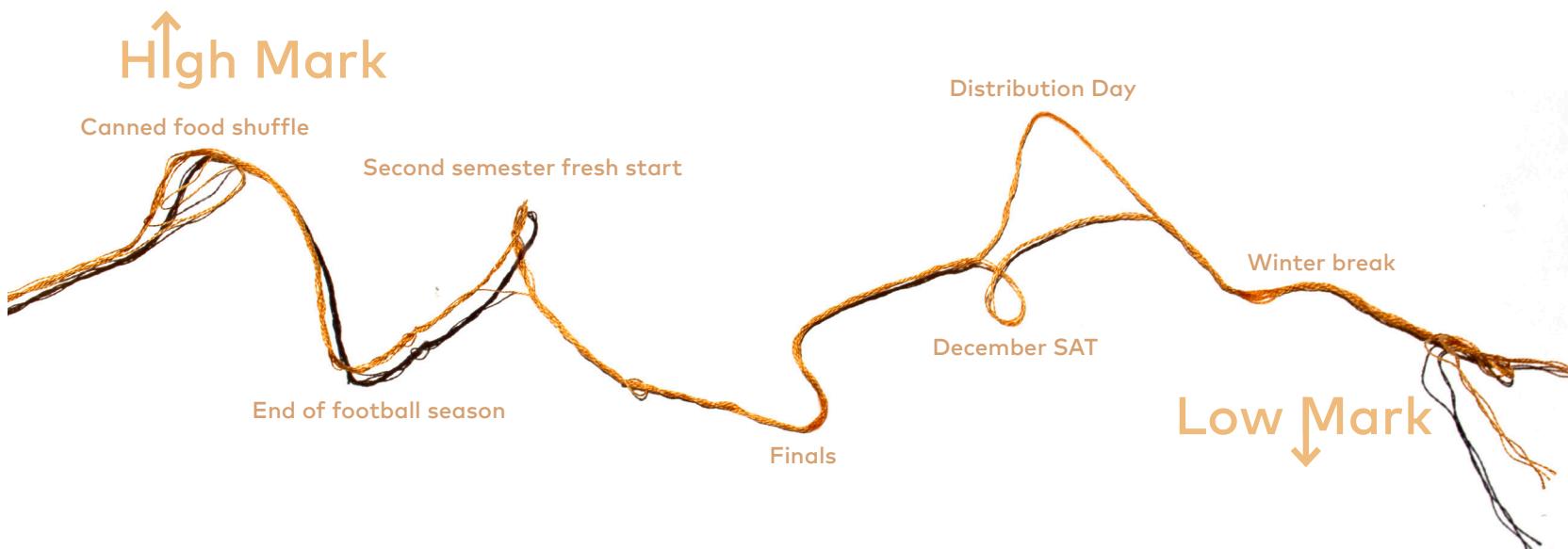
Distribution Day

December SAT

Winter break

## Low Mark

Finals



# CULTURAL STEREOTYPES

by Agatha Medeiros

MEXICO

## People perceive Mexicans as...

- Poor
- Drug dealers
- Uneducated
- Gang affiliated
- Latinas with big butts and hips
- Men who are gardeners
- Women who are maids or nannies
- Guys that play soccer
- Trouble makers in school
- Aggressive
- Spicy food lovers
- Part of a big family
- Macho men
- School drop-outs
- Undocumented



Andrea Nugent, Viri Garcia, Ms.Chavez, Monse Valdovinos, Roman Gonzalez, Yenifer Alas, Jackie Arias, Violeta Alvarado

## However...

“Being Mexican does not define the color of our skin or actions”

- Violeta Alvarado

“Just because you are Mexican doesn’t mean you have to speak spanish...[it] means being part of a familia and a bigger culture.”

- Viridiana Garcia

“Like many first US-born generations, I struggled with [my identity] ... The reality is that no single label can capture the complexity of each unique individual. Our race, ethnicity, and culture shape our perspectives and ideals, but it does not define us in our entirety ... We should value the heritage of others as we value our own.”

- Ms. Chavez

# People assume Salvadorans are...

Rude  
 Non English speakers  
 Less educated  
 Unmanned  
 Poor  
 Small  
 Mexicans  
 Gangsters  
 Very loud



Yenifer Alas

## However...

"People assume I'm Mexican because of the way I look, when I'm actually from El Salvador."

- Yenifer Alas

"I wish people would not only see the danger, but see the culture and beaches."

- Edwin Escobar

EL SALVADOR

# Stereotypes about Colombia...

Has a lot of drugs  
 People get mad easily  
 Women are pretty  
 Full of mafias  
 Everyone supports Pablo Escobar  
 Food is just like Mexican food  
 Dangerous



Valentina Rivera

## However...

" Colombia is not just drugs, it is a really beautiful place and there are a lot of interesting things to do. Our culture is amazing."

- Valentina Rivera

COLOMBIA

# Menlo-Atherton High School

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SUPERINTENDENT  
Susie Choe

To Whomever It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to inform you that Billy would like me to recommend him to your academic institution. In an email, Billy told me that he “has many redeeming qualities” saying “I truly utilize a plethora of hardworking skills and perseverance.” Billy is quite accurate as he does use a plethora of hardworking skills and perseverance. I have never seen a student quite so skilled at maintaining a solid 71.2% grade in my class. I have been impressed by this constant grade. One day, I graded a test and was pleasantly surprised to see that Billy had earned an A. I thought, “At last!” It turns out I graded the test with the wrong scantron though, and there was that 71.2% again. How does one even get a 71.2% on a 100 question Scantron? It truly does take skill.

In terms of Billy’s many “redeeming qualities,” there are truly too many to quantify. Billy is a model student of “dank memes,” as he calls them. He also loves to pick his nose and wipe the remnants on assignments he turns in. He is very conscientious as well. In case I might misidentify the stains on his papers, he makes sure to circle them and label each area of snot by time and location discovered. He is quite meticulous in his work, even when he forgets to write his name I always know which papers are his. So thoughtful of him!

Another quality I admire about Billy is his outstanding generosity. He always offers his homework to other students (who kindly refuse a 71.2% on their homework) and he has also recently given me many gift cards. The latest gift card he gave me was attached to a card he wrote, saying, “omg please write me a letter of rec. I will literally pay you for it.” What Billy lacks academically, he makes up in his sweet, altruistic character which is strongly rooted in his morals.

Billy also has an uncanny tendency to make friends. Before class he can often be found giving bread crumbs and nuts to his little friends while he tells some of his hilarious jokes. Whenever Billy approaches them they spring up on their hind legs to show him they’re ready for some of his “dank memes.” Oh, I forgot to mention: his friends are squirrels. Anyway, one day he even told me that his best (squirrel) friend, Archibald, laughed at his jokes! Whenever fellow classmates walk by him, they always laugh too so I guess his jokes must be pretty funny!

In conclusion, Billy is a good, positive student, and since I only get a teacher’s salary I am excited to take his gift cards and recommend him to your respective institution.

Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Reid I. Diamond  
Teacher, Menlo-Atherton High School



# ART AT M-A

Craig LeClaire teaches fine arts at Menlo-Atherton. Many of the AP Art Studio students often feature in the administrative offices at M-A and in Pride Hall. The art in Pride Hall has been named “The Advanced Student Art Gallery” by the art students. The art hung up in the office and hallway is changed as frequently as possible so that the student’s work is constantly up-to-date. LeClaire allows his students to find their artistic freedom by being lenient on what his students can and cannot do in their art. He explains that with his AP students, “I give them probably 20% to 25% of the projects. The other 75%-80% they have to design their own.” Some of these can currently be found in the administrative hallway. LeClaire is apt in making students interested in art to join his class, as anyone from advanced to beginner artists can join.

by Sarah Friedman

FEATURE



Acrylic Dog Painting  
**Fernando Gutierrez Garcia**



Self Portrait  
**Kass Lechtchinski**



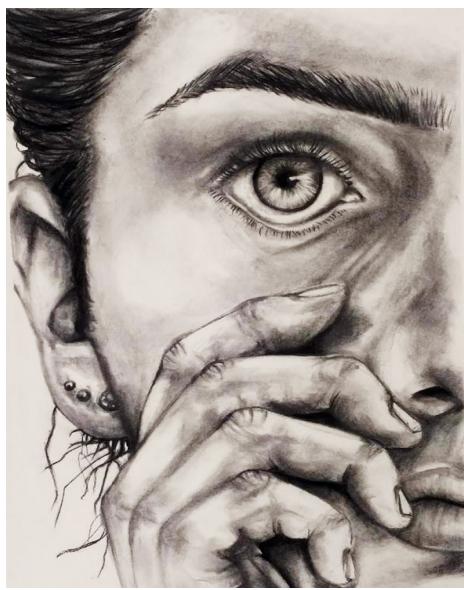
Graphite Pencil Still-Life  
**J.G. Madsen**



Ink Stylized Self-Portrait  
**Ninarose Roybal**



Acrylic Painting  
**Athena Xue**



Self Portrait  
**Alina Kalemeyer**



# BAY AREA WINTERS

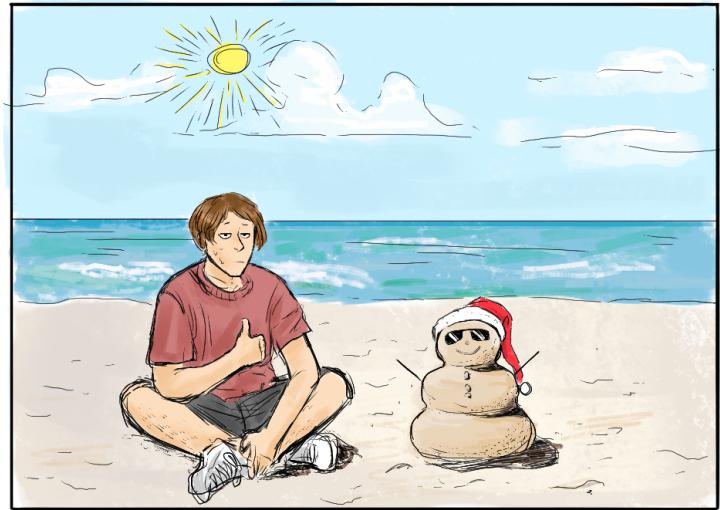


*Expectation*



## Weather

*Reality*



*Expectation*

## Gift Wrapping

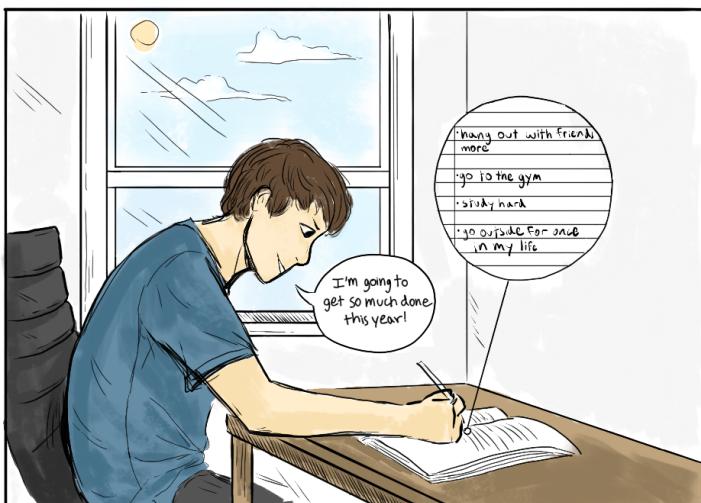
*Reality*



# Expectation      **Decorating**      Reality



# Expectation      **Resolutions**      Reality



# Expectation      **Free Time**      Reality



# resolut

## and why we can't seem

This year, like every other, people are welcoming the New Year with either a sense of accomplishment or utter disappointment in oneself for not following through with last year's resolutions. Not to fret though, you are not alone, research conducted by the University of Scranton and compiled by Statistic Brain found that only 8% of people who make New Year's resolutions fulfill their goal.

A Menlo-Atherton survey with 100 participants also yielded similar results: 53% admitted to making resolutions with 87.8% indicating that they usually never accomplish those resolutions. Psychology professor Peter Herman defines, in PubMed.gov, a "false hope syndrome" as one of the reasons for why most resolutions don't seem to stick with people. This "false hope syndrome" is a term that describes the unrealistic goals people give themselves, after persuading themselves they can somehow accomplish that goal. In reality, that goal is probably out of reach or merely impossible for that person to accomplish it. Others at M-A have expressed that some of the reasons why they haven't completed their resolutions are due to "laziness" or simply "forgetting" about those

resolutions throughout the year. False hope syndrome, laziness, and forgetfulness might all be factors but are not necessarily the main reason.

People make goals on December 31 and expect that goal to realize itself as soon as the clock ticks 12 AM, and that's the main reason for failure. The problem is that people are making their resolutions in a few minutes, one day of the year, while answering the dreadful question, "What's your New Year's resolution?" instead of taking the time to plan out a way to accomplish their goals and really turn their goals into a lifestyle. Part of the reason people are even answering this question in such a short amount of time instead of taking the time to plan out an attainable goal, is because of the societal pressure that arises when this question is posed. Many people, as I, have felt the clock ticking and impatient eyes staring right back at them with the unexplainable curiosity of what they'd like to improve this coming. If people truly did have the desire to change their lifestyle and accomplish their goal, they would be creating those goals as soon as they finish careful deliberation and planning.

So the question is, why only make a goal to

change your lifestyle on one day of the year? As Senior Julian Bowden explains, he makes goals "whenever [he] thinks of them." He also explains he has "maintained a decent gym schedule," allowing him to be successful in accomplishing his goal and almost forcing him to keep on schedule. Creating a goal without actually planning how you will achieve it first, is like planning to bake cupcakes but never buying any of the necessary ingredients: it just won't work out.

Here's the deal: if you want to have success in accomplishing your goals, you need to follow eight steps. The first, ask yourself what you want to improve in your life or if you even want to change anything. Next, give yourself a date that will serve as a starting point for your journey to improve your life. Third, plan HOW you will actually this. For example, if your goal is to get better at dancing, set aside 20 minutes to an hour of time a couple times of week to practice. Fourth, to remind yourself of this plan write it down somewhere or set an alarm. If you know that it is written down somewhere or that you have an alarm set, it makes the resolution feel real. There is no way you can ignore the fact that you made this

resolution and you now have a healthy self-inciped pressure to accomplish your goal. Fifth, actually try out your game-plan for a week. And sixth, jot down how each day went so you can switch things up and make your plan more fitting. Also, write how you felt each day after starting to work on your goal. Chances are, you will probably feel really good and if it is written down somewhere that is accessible it will be easy to read back on those experiences and crave that good feeling again, pushing you to continue towards the end goal. As Sophomore Manon Thien explains, "more determination [helps her] accomplish [her] goals" which is exactly what reflecting back on the work put in will do. The seventh step is to, after a while of working towards the goal, remove the writing and alarms to try and actually incorporate it so much into your routine that it becomes a total lifestyle for you—you don't need the reminders anymore. And finally, complete your goal and realize you are capable of doing so!

by Leah Marcus

# ions to accomplish them

- 1 Ask yourself what you want to improve in your life or if you even want to change anything
- 2 Give yourself a starting point
- 3 Make a plan
- 4 Write your plan down or make alarms to remind yourself
- 5 Try it out for a week
- 6 Jot down how each day went so you can see how good it made you feel later on
- 7 Remove your reminders and try naturally incorporating the goal in your life
- 8 Success!

# #metoo



About 3 of 4 female  
students surveyed  
at M-A have been  
sexually harassed.

**"[He] was making some weird comments then flat out grabbed my [butt] in front of my four year old brother. I was holding my brother's hand and grocery bags so I couldn't do anything."**

- M-A Senior

**"I Ubered home from my friends house... [my driver] shoved me against the door and started kissing me. I tried to shove him off, but I couldn't until my friend came out and got him off me."**

- M-A Sophomore

The simple hashtag #metoo recently referenced by Alyssa Milano took social media by storm this fall. Milano's tweet which referenced the Harvey Weinstein scandal, asked women to retweet #metoo if they had ever been sexually harassed or assaulted. Within 24 hours, numerous high profile celebrities as well as more than 4.7 million Facebook users had posted it. The rapid spread of #metoo brought light to the ongoing problem of unwanted sexual attention women face. 'Me too' has also been a catalyst for increased conversation about this issue here at Menlo Atherton and on a global scale.

#metoo, and the movement it has helped create, allows people to acknowledge their experiences with sexual assault, harassment, and mistreatment with less fear of humiliation or retaliation. As a new conversation on sexuality has emerged and many more women have come forward with their stories, more and more high profile men have been accused of such misbehaviors. Many men previously seen as untouchable such as politicians and businessmen have suffered consequences for their actions. Although it has been the high profile cases that have put this dialog in the media, this issue is not one that only pertains to actresses or politicians, it is an issue that is common in schools and the workplace. Unfortunately, these are issues students and teachers at Menlo-Atherton face too. When I asked female students at M-A if they had experienced any form of sexual harassment, over 75% said they had. Sexual harassment is an issue many women must face, yet until recently, has been relatively unacknowledged.

While the #metoo campaign was started in 2007 by Tarana Burke, it blew up after Alyssa Milano posted on Twitter about the movement in October in light of the allegations made against Harvey Weinstein. Burke started this movement in hopes of helping women of color who had survived sexual assault, abuse, and exploitation. She wanted to spread this phrase as a way for survivors to come together and say that they are not ashamed. Now women are using this phrase as a rallying call. Over the past months this has become one of the largest cohesive movements addressing sexual harassment, assault, and mistreatment.

While this movement is focused on spreading awareness of sexual harassment and assault around the world, the majority of press around it has been related to powerful men in Hollywood. In the past, many women who have publicly accused powerful men of harassment have been met with an onslaught of hatred and degradation. Unlike women who have accused powerful men in the past, the women who accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual harassment were met with momentus support from women on social media spreading the words "me too." This affirmation demonstrated to women that their stories could be validated. After the #metoo campaign began, at least 80 more women have accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual misconduct. The acceptance this movement has given survivors has led many more women and some men to come forward with accusations of sexual assault and harassment. Matt Lauer, Mark Halperin, Ed Westwick, Charlie Rose, Brett Ratner, Louis C.K., Roy Moore, Al Franken, and Kevin Spacey are just a few of the high-profile men who have all been accused of sexual misconduct by a number of men and women. These publicized and relatively accepted accusations are a step towards making progress in society, but far more must be done. While many victims have spoken out for the first time, there have not always been consequences.

The #metoo campaign in it of itself is only the tip of the iceberg. While the movement in the most basic sense solely encompasses the millions of social media posts including the phrase, "me too," but the implications and meaning behind of this initial movement are far greater. Like most social media trends, after the initial support from the masses, many people have forgotten about the phrase. Despite this, the effects of this movement remain front and center in the media months later. This is due to the fact that this movement is not about isolated cases or sectors of the workforce, it is about how in society sexual mistreatment has been accepted as a norm forcing victims to remain silent or face backlash. Clearly in our culture this is something that was not normally talked about, but through this title wave of acknowledgement women have felt emboldened to share their stories and increase awareness of this issue.

by Ava Honerkamp

**to:** me

**from:** /

*Me*

Holiday decorations and advertisements seem to arrive earlier each year. In an attempt to sell their products, shopping displays, commercials, and ads exaggerate the need to purchase gifts. We are all exposed to holiday advertising and entertainment in one form or another. Regardless of who ads target, they encourage us all to spend. However, the emotional sentiment of the holidays should not be linked with gift-giving, as there are other, more sincere methods to bring together family and friends. Selfless generosity strengthens a community and drives authentic human interactions, rather than the cost of a gift.

Giving, in its most basic form as reciprocity is an innate characteristic seen in various species for mutual benefit. English and psychology teacher Lisa Otsuka explains that advanced and "biologically fit" species "are always those who are interdependent" such as howler monkeys, bees, and dolphins. Although humans certainly rely on one another to construct a society, they deviate from this pattern on some level, because actions do not always communicate our intentions. There is a thin line between expecting a present in return and being entirely selfless when thinking of the recipient because as Otsuka says, "only you know your motivations." Otsuka sees an the undeniable benefit in acting for others, that our overall successes are "somehow intertwined," and we tend to be the most "generous with people who express generosity towards us."

People tend to think that buying more expensive presents will reciprocate more gratitude and love from the receiver. Often, people gift what their receivers would never purchase, revealing a miscommunication in the exchange. According to the Economist, while Americans "spend \$40 billion on Christmas gifts, \$4 billion is lost annually" in the mismatch between what people want and the gifts. If we consider other holidays, events, and birthdays, the cycle of gift-giving repeats and wastes money. Rather than conveying feelings toward recipients with the price tag, we should seek sincere methods of interaction. Sometimes the most thoughtful gifts have no strings attached because the giver does not expect a return.

Valuing the price of a gift over a touch of sincerity overlooks genuine connections between the giver and the recipient. Personal flattery and gain should not influence reasons to give. As seen on a larger scale, celebrities often donate to charities with the incentive of lowering taxes. Rather than spending money without involvement, Otsuka believes that the most precious commodity in our contemporary society is time. "Someone's complete, total, unequivocal presence" is a selfless way to give back. Only through time can the recipient's personality and interests be taken into account. According to Otsuka, "handwritten cards" and personalized anecdotes have nothing to do with money yet have the transcendent effect on the recipient.

*by Lara Karadogan*



$P'_g W'^\alpha$

$$p \left( \frac{T}{\bar{T}} \right)^2 \left[ P' \nabla_\alpha W'^\alpha - \overline{P' \nabla_\alpha W} \right.$$

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AAT

# HUMANITIES & STEM

STEM fields often associate with applied logic and systematic thinking, which contrast the intuition and interpretation-based humanities. The divide between the fields of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and humanities (language, visual and performing arts, history, and literature) creates an imbalance within learning; rather than having the freedom to explore multiple areas of academia, students feel pressure to select one path of focused study. This social expectancy limits appreciation for the disparate fields of thought, and the overlaps between threads of knowledge.

While many assume that STEM and humanities are divided, closer analysis on the nature of the separation itself reveals a false notion. Liane Strub, the AP Art History and AP English Language teacher at Menlo-Atherton, believes that the problem emerges from the “idea that there are two kinds

of thinking, which is bit of a misnomer. Research shows that math people are often music people [...] a lot of the great writers are scientists.” The humanities influence STEM fields as they cannot be mutually exclusive. The label of a right or left-brain thinker does not justify the divide between the fields; this disparate mentality limits one’s exposure to other subjects. As Strub says, “the either-or mentality is a 19th-century artifact,” that arises from “self-limiting definitions that our society has decided arbitrarily.” The divide does not reside on the premise of content and subject matter, but rather from the social misconception. The humanities and STEM have degrees of overlap and nuanced influence; creativity and logic are two mentalities which cannot be separated, as they apply to most disciplines in unison. Content inevitably overlaps, as threads of thought invariably influence one another

and creativity applies to many disciplines. Students have said to Strub, “I am not good at English because I am a math person or a science person, or I am a math and science person.” These statements, according to Strub, are heartbreakingly revealing as they pertain to the self-limiting perception of “art and literature as something that is amorphous or unknowable.” Students who feel more comfortable with logical thought and are accustomed to numerical and straightforward thinking feel dissuaded from the creativity prevalent in the humanities. However, as Strub says, “creativity applies to many endeavors.” It is imperative to acknowledge creativity as a form of thought rather than solely artistic expression. Fields within the humanities besides the visual arts and many fields of STEM require ingenuity and creativity. “Creativity” itself mistakenly assumes a place in the visual arts, when in actuality it is not bound by art.

People who consider the divide between the fields try to elevate one over the other. Strub notices that “in the Silicon Valley, there is an assumed superiority for STEM paths, and the idea that STEM is real thinking and truly challenging, and all the other ‘soft’ subjects do not require you to think hard. That is rather offensive.” Successful artist and writers do not necessarily approach their work with specific strategy and logic but apply the same dedication and thoroughness as any STEM professional. As Strub says, “they are two different kinds of thinking, but equally rigorous.”

While practicality does apply to many aspects of the humanities, it is not the similarity to STEM that justifies the field. While it is true that you have to be as logical and as disciplined as any scientist or mathematician to be a great artist or a great writer, finding the logic embedded in the humanities should not be a means of defending the field.

*by Sofia Karadogan*

# DEMOCRACY

## ON THE

# DECLINE



In an impassioned address, former US President Barack Obama reminded citizens that “the strongest democracies flourish from frequent and lively debate.” Globally, this debate is weakening, as several once-flourishing liberal democracies fall into democratic backslide. In Turkey, the government imprisons journalists and political dissidents on a daily basis. In Poland, the government passed measures that severely undermine its separation of powers. In Spain, the government recently eliminated the autonomy of Catalonia and the national police brutally attacked voters in a referendum. In the Philippines, the president has ordered political opponents captured or dead.

While these countries and their faltering democracies may seem irrelevant to those in the United States, a similar trend is, unfortunately, starting to surface here. Policy actions taken by President Trump and legislative bodies mirror steps taken in these other authoritarian-leaning states.

**“The strongest democracies flourish from frequent and lively debate.”**

— Barack Obama

The current and recent administrations have imposed several policies that squander the voices of citizens, mirroring the world-wide trend against democracy. Some of these policies and positions affect citizens' right to vote whereas others affect the very institutions themselves.

One such example is the presence of voter identification laws in several U.S states. These laws increase the amount of identification required to vote, disqualifying many who otherwise would be able to vote. These forms of identification include driver's licenses, passports, and citizenship certificates. Requiring identification to exercise the right to vote seems appropriate in theory and supposedly combating against voter fraud (this claim has been debunked by many political scientists). However, it has proven to have drastically different effects on voters and voter turnout. These aforementioned forms of identification often cost substantial amounts of money to obtain, a problem for many working-class or impoverished citizens. Consequently, these poorer voters—many of whom are minorities—are unable to exercise their right to vote. This can also have a considerable effect on the actual voting results as well: in Wisconsin, for instance, over 300,000 people were ineligible to vote in the 2016 presidential election due to lacking sufficient identification (New York Times). There, the margin of victory for Donald Trump, the Republican candidate, was only 28,000 votes. The implementation of these laws, almost exclusively by Republican bodies, is a clear attempt to sway voting results. American citizens are being deprived the right to vote. This is a clear undermining

of democracy: democracy is rule by the people, not just those with adequate identification.

The voices of underrepresented minorities are similarly disregarded in the common political practice known as gerrymandering. By definition, gerrymandering is the political tactic of drawing electoral districts in an attempt to give one party a majority. Both major political parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, have been guilty of using this tactic in recent years to influence the number of their party-affiliated representatives in Congress. Maps of national districts show many extreme examples of this, with highly illogical layouts. Legislators draw up the maps to concentrate or disperse certain demographic groups in an attempt to manipulate the total amount of seats gained. In 2012, Wisconsin Republicans, through gerrymandering the districts, were able to secure 60 of the 99 seats in the Wisconsin assembly despite only garnering 48.6% of the statewide popular vote (Brennan Center). Again, this is an example of political elites attempting to maintain their dominance by exploiting citizens' votes. One cannot consider the United States a true representative democracy if citizens' votes are manipulated to allow for a party's dominance.

The election of businessman Donald Trump as President of the United States has also frightened many as he verbally attacks the very institutions of American liberal democracy. There are unfortunately several instances of this. One example of this came during a court case concerning fraud allegations for Trump's namesake "Trump University." He, as per usual, became upset when the cards did not fall in his favor. Trump alleged that, because the judge hearing the case was "of Mexican heritage," he had an "absolute conflict" in ruling on the case. During the same trial, Trump later described the American justice system as a "rigged system."

Trump similarly undercut the judiciary in a later case concerning his "Muslim ban." In January of 2017, Trump signed an executive order preventing individuals from several predominantly-Muslim countries from entering the U.S. This "ban" initially raised red flags due to its obvious targeting of Muslim individuals, a clear violation of the fundamental constitutional principles of religious freedom and equal protection. Consequently, many dissented and a

Washington federal judge placed a stay on the order. Trump, angered, brought into question the judge's integrity, calling him a "so-called judge."

The independence of the judiciary and the separation of powers are two of this nation's most important founding principles. In these two examples, by bringing into question the judge's ability to make decisions and the impartiality of the judiciary, the President is directly undermining this idea. This is a tactic common in many illiberal democracies and pre-authoritarian states: Venezuelan President, Nicolás Maduro, for instance, has completely disavowed the Venezuelan Supreme Court, thereby decreasing the power of an institution that limits his power. It is discouraging to see the President of the United States take similar steps by discrediting the judge's decision.

Trump has similarly attacked the media on countless occasions, calling respected outlets such as the New York Times creators of "fake news." The media is yet another check on a leader's authority. By discrediting the media, Trump is effectively diminishing its ability to serve its true purpose: to expose the truth. This is also a trend common in authoritarian states, with leaders either controlling or curbing the media and its influence.

Unfortunately, there are many more examples of how American liberal democracy has lessened in strength over the recent years. However, this trend is not an absolute one. Trends, like governments and heads of states, can be reversed and improved upon. Democracy does not have to be discarded; debate need not dwindle. For within this country, there are still many who believe passionately in American democracy and its institutions. Democracy will not cease to exist if you voice your opinions above the noise of cynicism. Let these examples of downward trends be a motivator for you, a fire within, to fight for freedom, equality, and unity: the pillars of democracy. If you do not like how something is being done, write to your congresspeople. Better yet, run for office. Get outside with signs, exercise your right to assemble. Fight for democratic ideals within the United States and around the world. Stand in solidarity with those who do not yet have the freedoms that liberal democracy grants. Fight against injustice. Let your voice be heard. Let the people continue to rule. Let democracy continue to flourish.

by Nate Viotti

COLLEGE APPLICANTS, STUDENTS OR

# STATISTI



Note: SAT score and GPA not representative of model

# C S

The college application process sucks - there's no nice way to put it. It's long, demanding, and stressful. Many upperclassmen spend time comparing themselves to admitted students on Naviance, trying to figure out if their scores are on par with different universities or if they have a shot at their dream school. Sometimes it feels like all colleges care about are the statistics - when you are staring at your transcript, it's easy to get caught up in your GPA, SAT/ACT scores, and the difficulty of your course load. It's easy to lose sight of the more qualitative aspects of who you are as a student.

Although many colleges attempt to incorporate more personalized selection strategies such as personal essays and interviews, there's no question that the bulk of what they pay attention to are the numbers. In comparison to the expansive data colleges receive surrounding grades and testing, the writing portion, less than 650 words, can seem insignificant. Senior Rachel Frost states that "some don't even offer a supplemental essay which limits the amount of exposure they get to who you are."

While the application process still leaves much to be desired, many applications have taken steps towards becoming more "well rounded". Senior Ralph Jimenez believes that the "[provided] space [where] other than the questions provided, [you can explain] why are you a good

candidate for this school" is a great opportunity to show who you are as a student.

The one part of the application process Jimenez disagrees with: the transcript - "they don't see the struggles, how hard you try for each specific part of that class." Yes, in order to compare students, colleges must see how they've done on tests. But, by looking at a transcript with little to no context, vital parts of a student's academic reputation get lost: their work ethic, their ability to work well with others, and the time and effort they put into each class.

Not only does the pressure for statistics affect admissions, it influences students' decisions as they register for classes each year. Senior Lena Reibstein states that had she not been worried about her GPA, she would have taken on a more challenging course load. But, because she's "been told all her life 'don't take hard classes if you don't think you can do well in them because that's sacrificing your GPA.'" Frost seconds this sentiment, emphasizing the ways in which the focus on grades has impacted her learning experience: "I think it would have made those classes more enjoyable because I wouldn't have been stressed about my GPA and more focused on listening to the lesson, absorbing it, taking it in." By taking a bit of pressure off the statistics, students can focus on the true purpose of school: to learn.

by Elley Goldberg

# Vending Machines

Do they pass the culinary code of conduct?

by Aditya Srinath

**UNHEALTHY**

**DETRIMENTAL**

**HYPOCRITICAL**

The opening of the new G-wing this school year has brought vending machines onto Menlo-Atherton's campus. With the plethora of snacks offered, students have begun to depend on the vending machines for lunch rather than bringing their own food. While the vending machines have gained increasing popularity, is the decision to supply unhealthy food such a great idea? To investigate, I interviewed a select students to share what they have been taught in the nutrition section of their physical education classes, which say otherwise.

When asked what they had been taught regarding the role of nutrition, all three of the students had similar responses. AnnaMarie Van Buiten explains that "Good nutrition is necessary and important to have a healthy lifestyle," while Blake Mathews adds that he was taught to "eat different foods from varying food groups in order to maintain functioning bodies." Instead, M-A offers nine chip varieties but excludes whole grains or produce. The vending machines on campus do not follow this culinary code of conduct. While physical activity is a key part in staying healthy, diet shouldn't be forgotten as both "eating properly and taking part in physical activity will have a positive impact on an individual's health," according to Buiten. The vending machines on campus offer neither variety nor nutrition, leading to students choosing unhealthy snacks for lunch rather than more wholesome choices.

Aysu Aricanli recounts how Physical Education teachers "told us to stay away from candies and soft drinks and eat high protein." While it is true that candy or traditional soft drinks are not offered in the vending machine, one granola bar has 212 calories and 18 grams of sugar. In comparison, a Snickers bar has 215 calories and 20 grams of sugar, essentially making the granola bar incredibly close to being candy. And while beef jerky might seem like a good source of protein, it's also incredibly high in sodium, clocking in at 320 milligrams, 220 more milligrams of the daily sodium intake a person should eat. Another unhealthy food that attempts to raise health benefits in snacks are the Baked Hot Fries. While these baked snacks are advertised as a vitamin-enriched variant of contemporary snacks, they still suffer from the large quantities of saturated fat and sodium as their popular counterparts.

The drinks in the vending machines do not pass the nutritional test either: according to *The Atlantic*, the average La Croix Sparkling Water actually contains a low enough pH to cause tooth rot. Similarly Vitamin Water, which is often seen around campus, is incredibly high in liquid sugar, having only 50% less sugar content than a Coke or Dr. Pepper. In short, vending machines do not fit the health ideals M-A has taught its students and highlights both the irony in the things we are being taught versus the actions taken to follow through with those same lessons.

The introduction of vending machines on campus is incredibly hypocritical, as it has a negative effect on the student diet by promoting the consumption of unhealthy snacks instead of wholesome food by placing the machines throughout the campus. In total, the addition of vending machines contradict the nutritional ideals M-A stands for.



# 50 YEARS

## CONGRATULATING MS. WIMBERLY'S TIME AT M-A

This school year marks Pamela Wimberly's 50th year of teaching physical education at Menlo-Atherton.

Wimberly is one of Menlo-Atherton's most well-known teachers. She was named teacher of the year in the Sequoia Union School District in 1986. Additionally, she has recently been inducted into the Hall of Fame by the California Coaches Association. Wimberly started coaching basketball and softball in 1968. The basketball court of M-A has also been named after her to acknowledge her coaching and her time as athletic director at M-A.

However, Wimberly didn't initially begin teaching with the idea of being a coach, she explains, "I had taught Sunday School as a teenager to young children. I really liked being in that setting and instructing young people," leading her to ultimately decide to become a teacher. When Wimberly entered the educational environment, she only signed up to become a Physical Education teacher being unaware that the "contract said I had to coach basketball and softball. Once I started

coaching, I really enjoyed the smaller teams and competing with the teams against other schools."

In the last 50 years, Wimberly has seen M-A go through significant changes. She says, "I like the fact that I've seen M-A grow. It's so diverse. When I first came here, it was basically white with about 16% African American and 1% Asian and Latino. Now after 15 to 20 years, we've got all sorts of ethnicities here, and people are learning about other people's cultures." When Wimberly first started at M-A, she saw a riot from the African American students who wanted to be treated equally and who wanted an education that contained such things as black literature and black history.

The push in the past for representation affected the curriculum at M-A to be more reflective of the student population, as M-A has now included more in its curriculum about Central American, Asian and Black history. She acknowledges the importance of learning about people's backgrounds and learning to accept differences. Wimberly has seen how the increase in diversity has created a much

stronger community at M-A.

In the future, she would like to see M-A change even more by continuing the outstanding academic curriculum and athletic program for the future students who choose to attend this school.

In addition to being a PE teacher at M-A, she currently coaches a women's 65+ slow pitch softball team. Wimberly never seems to stop. When I asked if retirement was in the near future, Wimberly immediately hit me with a sigh and said, "Sometime soon. I don't know when, but whenever it strikes me. I do have a new colleague though, and I want to make sure she learns what's going on here, then I'll make a decision." Wimberly has shown much enthusiasm, not only for this school, but for her co-workers and students as well.

From the staff of The Mark: Mrs. Wimberly, we can't thank you enough for all the time and effort you've put into the M-A community for these past 50 years and we hope that you can continue to show your love for this school!

*by Sai Sema*

**SPRÅK AV M-A**

**ЯЗЫКИ М-А**

**LEA FAKA M-A**

**M-Aの言語**

*by Lara Karadogan, Leah Marcus, Sofia Karadogan*

**LANGUAGES AT M-A**

**LINGUE DI M-A**

**م-ا زبانلار**

# JACE AMBWANI



Spanish in AP Spanish Lit. Three-ish years ago I used to watch videos in Spanish in my free time as a way of learning the language.

*Have you visited Russia?*  
I visited Russia, where I have grandparents, three times when I was little. I thought it was really strange and cool that every random person spoke Russian. In some ways, I felt like I could interact more with the people around me. I haven't been there since age 10 or so.

*How was being bilingual or trilingual benefitted you?*  
I like being able to read and talk in three languages. Spanish is fun for me because I'm not good enough for it to be effortless. I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't talk to my parents and Russian friends in Russian, or if I couldn't talk to everyone else in English, so those two are pretty necessary.

*Are there any words or phrases that get lost in translation?*  
There are some nice words for types of sadness in Russian that don't translate well into English. Печаль is a light and romantic sadness, тоска is usually translated as longing but isn't quite that, отчаянье is a mix of despair and recklessness. Also, words for taste-- пошлый is kind of like "tacky" but applicable to a different, greater variety of tasteless things, and слашавый is like sappy or cheesy but not quite.

*Do you think in that language? Dream? Or just speak?*  
I think in whatever language I'm speaking, even Spanish when I'm speaking it. I don't know if I dream in words.

*Do you identify as part of that culture?*  
I'm American, I guess. I think to truly be Russian you have to have lived in Russia, but the culture has definitely informed me and is a large part of who I am.

*Do you think you will pass on this language?*  
I think everyone deserves to be taught multiple languages, so if I can, yes.

*What languages are you fluent in, and what languages do you take at M-A?*  
I am fluent in English and Italian. I take Spanish and honestly enjoy it, but I'd also be interested in learning a new language.

*How did you learn to speak a new language?*  
I taught myself Italian on Duolingo and Pimsleur; I also have a few friends in Italy who I converse with regularly. I am currently using Duolingo to learn German and Danish, but have yet to be fluent in them. My mother's family is Italian, and my father is from India.

*Have you visited a country or your home country that speaks your language?*  
I spent my summer in Italy on an immersion program, and then I lived with my Milanese friend for a month.

*Do you think you will pass on this language? Absolutely.  
How has speaking multiple*

# NIKITA MANIN



*What languages are you fluent in, and would you take your language if it was offered at M-A?*

I'm fluent in Russian and English, and to some degree in Spanish. I would not take Russian if it were offered--I don't think there's anything I can't learn from reading books in Russian on my own.

*How did you learn to speak a new language?*

My first language was Russian because my parents spoke it. I didn't really speak English until I got to kindergarten. I started learning Spanish in middle school and enjoyed it.

*Do you practice the language on a daily basis?*

I speak Russian at home, English at school, and

*languages benefitted you?*  
I know more about cultures and history, and I'm able to make connections with people across the globe.

*Are there any words or phrases that get lost in translation?*

In Italian, there are words like "Quindi" and phrases like "Dai Forza" that I use, but I can't directly translate.

*Do you think in that language? Dream? Or just speak?*

I dream, think, and speak Italian. Sometimes small parts of my dreams and thoughts will be in German or Spanish, but it's mostly just Italian and English.

*Have you ever spoken this language at school?*

Yes with exchange students or teachers who happen to speak Italian or German.



# FANGUPO

*What languages do you speak?*  
English and Tongan.

*Would you take your language if it was offered at M-A?*  
Yes.

*How did you learn to speak a new language?*  
My family taught me, and it was my first language.

*Who in your family speaks this language?*  
Everybody in my family speaks Tongan.

*Do you practice the language on a daily basis?*  
I used to always speak Tongan at home, but now I speak in English to my siblings and Tongan to my parents. I speak Tongan at M-A with my friends when I don't want others to hear.

*Have you visited a country or your home country?*  
My entire childhood, until 2013 was spent there.

*Do you think in that language? Dream? Or just speak?*  
I speak, think, and dream in English.

*Do you identify as part of that culture?*  
I identify both as Tongan and American, but mostly Tongan.

*that speaks your language, or your home country?*

Yes, I used to live there and moved back to the U.S. in 2013. I also go back to Sweden every year to visit friends and family.

*How was being bilingual or trilingual benefitted you?*

I think being bilingual has benefitted me greatly. It has allowed me to experience two very different cultures and take the best from each and combine them. I also think that this has broadened my perspective on the world and shown me the beauty in embracing different cultures...I take great pride in identifying myself as part of the Nordic society and community.

*Are there any words or phrases that get lost in translation?*

The English and Swedish grammar systems are very different so direct translations going both ways often don't make sense. Direct translations produce a lot of strange phrases, especially with common catch phrases and cliches since they frequently have a profound meaning than what is verbally said. The Swedish language also has far more homonyms, words that are spelled and pronounced the same but have different meanings.

*Do you think in that language? Dream? Or just speak?*

I would say that the majority of the time I think and dream in Swedish. This is most likely because I associate most of my childhood memories with Sweden and have grown up calling Sweden home. It's mostly when it comes to numbers and math that I need to think in English.

*Do you think M-A embraces language identity and have you ever spoken this language at school?*

I think M-A does a great job in embracing language identity and encouraging the students to share the unique experiences they have with those cultures. Yes, I have, there are and have been

several students who are also fluent in Swedish who I often speak to when I see them on campus.

*Do you think you will pass on this language?*

I will pass on the language and urge them to enjoy all that comes with it.



# JACOB COBSON

*What was your first language and who in your family speaks this language?*  
My first language was Swedish, but I grew up speaking both Swedish and English equally well.

*Do you practice the language on a daily basis?*  
Yes, the majority of my conversations at home are in Swedish which allows me to keep my fluency and not develop an accent. I also read and write Swedish on a daily basis.

*Have you visited a country*

*Do you identify as part of that culture?*  
I identify both as Tongan and American, but mostly Tongan.

## FEATURE

*What languages do you speak?*  
I am fluent in Farsi and English, although my French is fluent enough to get around comfortably in conversation.

# NEKON SAADAT



*Would you take Farsi if it were offered at M-A?*

I would definitely take my language if it were offered as I still need to improve my writing skills in Farsi.

*How did you learn to speak a new language?*

Family since birth. I had annual month-month and a half long summer trips to Iran to visit family since age 1, so I have grown up with the culture and language.

*Have you visited a country that speaks your language?*

Yes; my family along with my aunt who lives with my atomic family regularly speaks Farsi.

*How was being bilingual or trilingual benefitted you?*

It has given me new perspectives on the relationship and function of certain tones and cognate structures between different spoken and written languages.

*Do you think in that language? Dream? Or just speak?*

I think in all languages I have even a basic understanding of despite not being fluent in most. Sometimes Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, but most commonly French, Farsi, and English.

*Do you identify as part of your culture?*

Yes, I consider myself a 110% Persian.

*Do you think M-A embraces language identity?*

I don't think M-A even recognizes it. There are very few Persians in MA, so there is little awareness of our presence, culture, language, or difference from others, therein leaving me with nothing to say but that there isn't much acknowledgment of us period. I do speak it though; often with Rod, Alex Raji, or my brother. Again there are very few of us.



# AYA SUGIURA

*What languages are you fluent in?*

English, and Japanese to some extent.

*Would you take your Japanese if it was offered at M-A?*

Probably not. I think it would be boring, and I would be cringing at everyone's pronunciation the entire time, just being honest here. I have wanted to learn French for a while, so I would have chosen it either way.

*How did you learn to speak a new language?*

My mom taught and spoke Japanese in addition to English to my sister and I since we were born, so we grew up with it. She also sent us to a Japanese language school all day on Saturday from first grade.

*Do you practice the language on a daily basis?*

Probably not every day. My dad is Japanese-American, and his Japanese isn't bad, but it isn't fluent either, so as a family we speak English. At school, I am obviously using English, and my sister and I always speak English to each other. Unfortunately, I do feel like my fluency is faltering...

*Have you visited Japan?*

Yes, I have been to Japan every year since the year I was born, usually over summer break.

*How was being bilingual benefitted you?*

My mom's side of the family only speaks Japanese, so being able to speak Japanese

is important. I also think in general, I might be more open-minded to or hold more interest in people of different cultures and backgrounds...

*Do you think in Japanese? Dream? Or just speak?*

I have thought and dreamt in Japanese before... When I am spending three to four weeks in Japan over the summer, I might be thinking in Japanese just because that is the language that I am communicating with.

*Do you identify as part of that culture?*

I feel suspended in-between. I can't be completely one or the other because I have seen both.

*What ethnicity do you consider yourself?*

Japanese. I don't think "American" is an ethnicity unless you are Native American...

*Have you ever spoken this language at school?*

I actually have. My current stand partner in Orchestra is also Japanese, and so we tend to converse in Japanese. It's pretty entertaining, and probably good for my speaking skills since she is truly fluent.

*Do you think you will pass on this language?*

I would like to. Although my idea for my future family is quite unconventional, so it might not be realistic to teach my children Japanese...

# HIGH SCHOOL

by Ellie Shepard

High school internships have been increasing in popularity because of their beneficial effects on students' future. Internships are a great way to explore different careers for high school students since many universities require a decision on a major before a student is accepted into the school. Internships prepare students for job searching in the future and it sets them apart from other students. It is impressive on college resumés and can help someone get a recommendation from a mentor. Find information about internships around the Bay Area at:  
<http://www.internships.com/high-school/san-francisco-ca>

**"A LOT OF THINGS ARE POSSIBLE EVEN IF YOU HAVE LIMITED KNOWLEDGE [...] IF YOU HAVE A VISION YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT."**



Through the Academy program, the Junior, Ric Gold was able to apply to intern at Facebook during this past summer. The computer teacher, Chris Rubin mentioned the application process to his classes. Gold applied and was accepted into the internship program and "worked in the IT department and helped build cameras for AV rooms...[and] coded every single Tuesday". When asked how the internship changed his future goals, Gold explains, "A lot of things are possible even if you have limited knowledge [...] if you have a vision you can achieve it". Gold was interested in working at Facebook because of his love for technology and the company's reputation.



Cameron Bozdog, a Senior at M-A, has worked at the Cheshier Lab at Stanford since she was sixteen. There she focused on "treating brain cancers with combinatory treatments of immunotherapy [...] and chemotherapy [...and] researched tumor metastasis". Bozdog decided to intern at the Cheshier Lab because she was interested in neuroscience and wanted to expand her knowledge on the subject. She explains that "this experience has given me the tools to continue pioneering new explanations and I have learned that science is not just a stationary curriculum but rather an ever-changing way of thinking that can shape society and heal humanity". Through her internship experience, Bozdog has been able to follow her passion and do research to treat brain cancer.

# INTERNSHIPS



Rose Serna, an Academy Junior at Menlo-Atherton, was introduced to the idea of working a summer internship by her teacher Rubin. He had advertised it to her class and the following summer she was accepted and “worked in inventory and technology” in the district at Woodside High School. Only Serna and two other students from Academy applied. Her knowledge on technology helped her obtain the internship but she continued to “learn more things about technology” through the district’s paid internship. Serna’s internship, like many others around this area, gave her a sense of productivity and was “a good work experience”.



The M-A Senior, Summer Buhl, was notified by the National Charity League, a cooperation which she is involved in, about her internship at the Boys and Girls Club (BGCP). There she assisted teachers and mentors for the 1st and 2nd graders at Garfield School and helped the children with their school work whether it be “art, math, reading, and science projects”. BGCP was a great place for Buhl to “get involved in with [her] community [...and she] strived to be an impactful intern”. At this internship Buhl needed to be patient with the students and have the ability to “effectively collaborate” with her fellow interns. Buhl has been interning with BGCP at Garfield School for three summers as she “strived to be an impactful intern”.



A Junior, Jose Alonso worked in the Sequoia Union High School District with Rose Serna and one other academy student on inventory and technology. Parallel to Serna, Alonso was introduced to the idea of interning at the district through Chris Rubin, the Multimedia Academy teacher here at M-A. Jose worked with “scans, computers, protectors...anything that has to do with technology”. Jose explains the effects that the internship had on him. The internship “made me plan for my future [...] what I want to do and maybe I want to do with something in inventory”. Jose was also offered to come and intern again this summer.

**“[IT] MADE ME PLAN FOR MY FUTURE”**



## Donut Destinations

by Ellie Shepard

### Chuck's Donuts

801 Woodside Rd, Redwood City

What I ordered: chocolate glaze

Chuck's Donuts, the donut club's go-to shop had great donuts. The dough had the perfect texture because of its flakey and light interior. The glaze has the right consistency and wasn't grainy from the sugar and it wasn't too sweet for my taste. In comparison to the other donuts, this one took gold. It is no wonder why the donut club chooses this place for their donuts.

### Donut Delight

732 Willow Road, Menlo Park

What I ordered: chocolate glaze

Donut Delight had a large variety of donuts and very nice customer service. The donuts themselves were pretty good. They were a little greasy but the glaze definitely made up for that. The glaze was sweet but it did not overcoat the donut. The dough had the perfect consistency and the donut was overall tasty.

### Happy Donuts

1330 El Camino Real, Redwood City

What I ordered: chocolate glaze

Happy Donuts was a packed location at 11 A.M. on a Saturday morning. I could barely find parking but the donuts were worth it. The glaze struck a good balance of not too sweet but not waxy either. However, their dough was a little too dense for my taste, the grease free donut is definitely a reliable choice if you are in Redwood City.

### Donut Depot

3383 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park

What I ordered: chocolate glaze

Donut Depot has a popular morning crowd and delicious donuts. They were fried for the right time, the dough had great consistency, the glaze was sweet but not too sugary.

# Z Z A N D J A B



Jazz Band III is Menlo-Atherton's most advanced Jazz Band. Over the years, the group has achieved many accomplishments: last year, the jazz ensemble and jazz combo won first place in their category at the Delta Jazz Festival. They have also placed at other prestigious competitions like the Reno Jazz Festival, Folsom Jazz Festival, and the College of San Mateo Jazz Festival, frequently receiving high scores across the board.

Clarinetist and tenor saxophonist Nikita Manin can attest to the unique opportunities the Jazz Band offers. Manin enjoys the practice schedule, stating that "few bands outside of school get to rehearse every day, so the regularity is unique and nice." Manin says that "if it wasn't for school music programs, I probably wouldn't be doing music, and I think that's their main advantage, that they involve lots of people who otherwise might not play music at all. The music program doesn't have to be amazing for that to happen, it just has to exist."

As a violinist, senior Michael Sze has the option between participating in the Jazz Band and orchestra. When asked for his reasoning behind choosing Jazz Band, he explains, "It is definitely a bit more of a struggle than

other instruments [being a violinist]. Violin itself is not very common in jazz, especially in big bands, so I'm glad both my middle school band director and Mr. Kurrus let me play. Because the other horns are in different keys, I don't always have a part in the right key. On several songs I have to transpose or learn the part by ear. However, this has made me a better musician." Sze also mentions that "a violin doesn't naturally sound loud enough to compete with say a drum set or a trumpet, so I plug into an amplifier as a guitar would." He feels that he has managed fairly well being a violinist, and due to his unusual part in the Jazz Band, Sze stands out as a special player. Sze leaves with some final advice: "Get involved, and play as much as you can. But don't drown yourself in practice, because music should be fun after all."

Chris Iyer, a trumpet player, credits the Jazz Band for broadening his musical opportunities. The experience he's gained pushed him to create a 5-person jazz combo called "The Blues by Five." He believes that, "the biggest opportunity that M-A jazz has given me is just all the talented jazz musicians here--being able to connect and play gigs with them." For Iyer, "it's been amazing to find a group of such talented and

committed jazz musicians within [his] own school and develop [his] own love for music with the [help] of the Jazz Band and jazz combo." Participating in the Jazz Band is more than just a school activity; by taking trips to festivals, students are exposed to the world of jazz that extends far outside the classroom.

Iyer adds that Jazz Band "has absolutely banded (pun very much intended) us together into a community. Especially the seniors, who have mostly been in the same band together for all four years of high school, our very closest friends are in Jazz Band ... and on festival trips, we spend loads of time with each other, making it even more glorious when we win festivals like Anaheim's WorldStrides Festival of Gold."

Kent Kurrus, the music director at M-A, has lead the Jazz Band for the past eight years, working to increase the role of music in M-A students lives. Kurrus take pride in the dedication he sees from the musicians of the Jazz Band, each of whom goes far beyond the bare minimum - playing extra gigs and taking private lessons on top of their rehearsals. "It's like somebody who plays sports all year long; music is their focus."



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