

# The High Times

SINCE 1933

RIDGEWOOD, JUNE 2017

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## Senior Prom 2017

*A night to remember for the graduating class.*



Ireland Horan

Kieran Powers, Molly McCarthy, Haley Tyrell,  
Aidan Callaghan



Ana McDade

Christian Seremetis, Garrett Goodman, Jack Simpson, Ana McDade,  
Sarah Catalano, Hannah Rigdon, Julia Stuart, Kavi Patel, Allie McCandless,  
Haley Driscoll, Tamara Fazylova



Grace DiModugno

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Charlotte Hamlet

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Skylar Franco, Charlotte Hamlet



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cobs, Julia Felsenstein, Maddie Leonard



Olivia Martinez

Olivia Martinez and Morgan Bracken

### News

The Final Stretch:  
Yoga, Mindfulness, and  
Relaxation

Pg. 2



### Arts & Culture

Post Modern Art NYC: A  
Canvas for Chaos

Pg. 3



### Features

Find out where the Class of  
2017 is headed!

Pg. 4



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# The Final Stretch: Yoga, Mindfulness, and Relaxation

**Matt Zachem**  
staff writer

Feeling pressured as the school year winds down? Do you want something to take your mind off preparing for final exams? Look no further than the new Yoga, Mindfulness, and Relaxation (YMR) Club!

The club is organized by Yoga and Stress Management teacher Mr. Rein. Mr. Rein is new at Ridgewood High School, and he wants to provide students who are not taking his class with the opportunity to relax during school. When I asked Mr. Rein what the purpose of his club is, he explained that “the club stands for spreading peace, love, happiness, and positive vibes throughout the Ridgewood community. By looking inward, we gain the ability to grow and create positive changes in our lives and the lives of others!” I asked him what kind of activities the members will be able to do in the YMR Club. He replied that “you can participate in Hatha yoga (the physical yoga that Westerners call

yoga), different yoga workshops such as an inversion workshop (headstands/handstands) or an acroyoga workshop, various guided imageries, mandala art, gratitude journals, guided meditation, and some special events along the way.”

While this sounded intriguing to me, I wanted to find out how a club like this could directly help students of Ridgewood High School. Therefore, I went to Lovisa Sjolander, one of the club’s founders, who is also a member of RHS Global Classroom. This year, members of the Global Classroom conducted a stress survey among RHS students, and gathered interesting results from their research. The students concluded that “the majority of students ranked grades and assessments as the biggest stress factors. In addition to academic stress, extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs also add stress to students’ lives.” When I talked to Lovisa about how YMR Club can ease those everyday pressures, she said, “YMR can help students who

feel stressed by teaching them relaxation techniques, and help students change their mind-set to combat stress.”

Personally, I found this club very welcoming. One of the club’s co-presidents, Bruce Zhang, mentioned that one does not need to have any experience with yoga to join. Interestingly, Bruce had never done any yoga before he took the school’s Yoga and Stress Management class in junior year. However, he really enjoyed the class and wanted to continue doing yoga and relaxing. I asked him why he was excited for this new club, and he said that “YMR is a good opportunity to take a break in the middle of the day and ease yourself from all the different things causing stress and learn something new along the way. I’d definitely encourage others to try it, no matter for what purpose, as the concepts in YMR could definitely be applied to several aspects of life.” If you are interested in attending, the club meets during lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Gym III!



Ana McDade



# Why I Read... And Why You Should Too!

**Sonny Mo**  
staff writer

During my first two years in high school, reading was the last thing I would do to pass time. Some described reading as a form of soothing escape, yet every time I picked up a book, I would feel the opposite—as though I was duped into a vortex of perpetual words and letters that spelled “b-o-r-i-n-g.” Even for school-assigned readings, I often took shortcuts by resorting to Sparknotes and Shmoop to help explain the text.

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Amidst the hustle and bustle of high school, finding the time and willpower to do extracurricular reading was simply not an option.

However, in the past two years of constant exposure to new experiences and perspectives, my stance on reading has radically departed from that of my first two years. In retrospect, my biggest regret in my past four years of high school is not reading enough. Much of my character that I have cultivated can be attributed to the books I have read in the past two years. Perhaps had I not read *The Gatekeepers* by Jacques Steinberg, I would not have received admission to my top-choice university. And *Finishing Letters to a Young Scientist* by E. O. Wilson inspired me to reach out to notable academics in different fields of study.

But what ultimately made me start reading as a Junior was not because of the unforeseeable fruits that I would reap along the way. I wanted to try to provide order to an otherwise arbitrary amalgam of incidents and events that enter and leave every life by discovering meaning within parallels and connections abound around us. In turn, I would learn to “know thyself” as Socrates famously says in Plato’s *Republic*.

To advocate for the case for reading with merely a personal experience would not do much justice. From a broader perspective, a common thread among successful people is that they read. In the early stages of his investment career, Warren Buffett read 1000 pages each day. Bill Gates reads 50 books a year, while Oprah Winfrey, Mark Zuckerberg, and Elon Musk are also voracious readers. Mark Cuban devotes three hours a day to reading. If CEOs of Fortune 500 companies and the world’s most eminent intellectuals

are taking huge chunks of time out of their day to read, surely there must be an inherently valuable reason to read. Name a serious successful person other than Nicki Minaj and you will probably find that they read.

So why should you read? It might be because by not reading you are seriously compromising your odds of achieving your goals and depriving yourself of one of the most productive ways of developing your character. It might be because reading provides a form of escapism that momentarily shelters you from the harsh realities of life, so that you can face them on another day. It might be because you are tired of monotonous routines of life that make it hard for you to be fully conscious or “feel alive.” Perhaps you want to challenge yourself to continually absorb new experiences and knowledge, so that you do not have to settle for mediocrity. Or it might be that you already know just how rewarding reading can be. Whatever the reason is, the primary importance lies on actually doing the reading.

In my case, the lessons from books have helped me elucidate my reasons for reading in a more cogent and concrete manner. I’ve learned to embrace that there are far many more uncertainties than certainties in life, and this truth is ascribable to the maxim that the nature of change is unforgivably perpetual and inevitable. In life, just about anything can be suddenly stripped away--comfort, shelter, friends, and possessions--but one thing: the person that I am. For this reason, I want to enlighten myself of the greater truths that govern my sense of being and self, and in the process, continually construct my character and understanding of who I am. In essence that’s why I read.

# RHS Celebrates 125 Years: Looking Back

**Daniel Greenman**  
staff writer

On May 19th, Ridgewood High School celebrated its quasiquicentennial (125th anniversary) with a party in Veterans Memorial Field. Alumni from all over the course of the school’s history attended a gala party featuring drinks, live entertainment, and fundraising.

Ridgewood High School was founded in 1892 by B.C. Wooster, who instituted a high school with Ridgewood’s ninth grade class, of which he was the principal. That first freshman class met for school in a four-room building on Union Street and graduated to the sophomore class the following year. The students moved into a new building on Cottage Place (then named Beech Street) in 1895, when Ridgewood High School was a three-year institution. For its first graduating class, Ridgewood High School graduated two people, compared to more than four hundred this year (although the population of the village was slightly more than 1000 then, compared to greater than 25,000 today). Ridgewood High School officially became a four-year high school in the 1905-1906 school year. The school moved into its current location on East Ridgewood Avenue in 1919; the building was designed by the prominent New York architectural firm of Tracy and Swartwout.

In honor of the anniversary, it’s worth thinking back to the world in which those first Ridgewood High School students lived. The birth year of Ridgewood High School, 1892, was the first year that immigrants were accepted at Ellis Island, which processed more than 450,000 new Americans over the course of the year. It was the year that James Naismith, a physical education instructor in Springfield, Massachusetts, first formalized the rules of a game he had invented named “basketball.” It was the year that the British author Arthur Conan Doyle published his first collection of Sherlock Holmes stories, which included “A Scandal in Bohemia” and “The Red-Headed League.” It was the year that stories like “Clubmen In A Scrimmage”, a cane and umbrella fight between two gentlemen, headlined the New York Times.

These are the highlights, but a look at any random newspaper from that memorable year paints an even more interesting picture of life during that time. Take November 18th, a day when the front page of the New York Times noted the destructive passage of a cyclone through rural Illinois and the death of a prominent New York banker. Either of those could be contemporary headlines, but to the right of them there is one that could have only come from the late nineteenth century: “Clubmen In A Scrimmage,” which describes a “cane and umbrella fight” and begins with “Society’s smart set in the boxes at the horse show had a lot to talk about last evening.” The balance of the article gives the account of a battle between two gentlemen, Colonel Robert “Bob” Neville and S.S. Howland, that began when Neville inexplicably clobbered Howland with his umbrella. Howland retaliated by delivering Neville two blows across the face with his cane. “Mr. Howland’s friends at once hustled Neville out of the way,” the Times goes on, “and induced Mr. Howland to forego the further punishment that he was anxious to inflict.”

We’ve come a long way in 125 years. Dear Ridgewood High School in 125 years, I hope we don’t seem this odd.



Arts & Culture

# Post Modern Art NYC: A Canvas for Chaos

Lara Baskin  
staff writer

We all have our own story of art -- how we see and perceive art is entirely attributed to the pieces we've seen, the effect on us, and the connections we draw among them. This latter observation brings to mind the many art exhibitions currently offered in New York City, and the way in which they interconnect. There is a distinct post-modern art movement, seeking to contradict aspects from late 19th to mid-20th century art, being referenced within these recent exhibits. I was fortunate enough to see The Arcades Project: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin, at the Jewish Museum in New York City. The Arcades Project began in 1927 as a short article about the newly instituted nineteenth-century iron-and-glass vaulted shopping passages in Paris, known as arcades. The article, considered to be German philosopher Walter Benjamin's magnum opus, is the foundation for this contemporary art exhibit featuring contemporary artworks

ranging from sculpture, painting, video, to photography. Benjamin expanded his project into an extensive study of Parisian society and the origins of consumer culture for over a decade. He left his work unfinished at the time of his suicide while fleeing from the Nazis in 1940, and The Arcades Project, which was published after his death, consists of Benjamin's quotes, reflections, and notes on Paris, which he considered to be both the cultural and commercial capital of the world in the nineteenth century. Upon first viewing this exhibit, I was blown away by the chaos of the first room I visited. It consisted of a topsy-turvy assemblage of hundreds of stuffed animals and doll collages, which produced a disorienting effect. It was as if I were peeking through a peephole into someone's emotional unravelling. The disarray was instituted to represent nineteenth-century Europe, roiled by social unrest as shifts in politics and industry led to the growing power of the working class. In present-day America, similar injustices—relentless discrimination against

minority groups and considerable imbalances in wealth—have recently triggered similar protest movements. Poet Kenneth Goldsmith annotated each artwork in the exhibition, extending Benjamin's reflection on Paris as the capital of the nineteenth century into New York as the capital of the twentieth. In a similar manner, Unfinished Conversations: New Work at the Museum of Modern Art brings together pieces by over a dozen artists, all of whom address current anxiety and unrest around the world through their work. The exhibition considers the intertwining themes of social upheaval, the influence of history on the shaping of identity, and art's ability to collocate fact and fiction. The featured artists tackle contemporary power struggles by engaging in debates on labor exploitation and government surveillance. Lastly, my visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view the Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between exhibit upheld this concept of disruption in post-modern art and design. While observing the designs, I sensed feelings of uncertainty, hostility, and rage in each piece, giving me the feeling that I was being clued in on something relating to the current

state of our world. Rei Kawakubo, who is considered to be one of the most revolutionary contemporary designers today, disrupted the fashion and art world through exploring unconventional subject matter and the tension between originality and mass production. She employs methods of destruction, disorder, and unconventional approaches to her design philosophy, and uses the color red to represent power, strength, and rebellion. Kawakubo also expresses disdain for conformity, using cages to symbolize being boxed in with no freedom of expression. By experiencing these thought-provoking exhibitions firsthand, I was able to work out the interrelationship of the art exhibits described above. This "interconnected-ness" between them is that they all explore social and political turmoil and disorder throughout history. Since all of these exhibits challenge civil, social, and political positions, and profess uncertainty regarding the future of our world, their simultaneous exhibition is no coincidence. This demonstration of history repeating could, and perhaps should, be read as a warning as to what the future could hold for the state of humanity.



Lara Baskin

# Interdisciplinary Arts Education

Violet Maxwell  
staff writer

When one thinks of progressive education, what's the first thing that comes to mind? A top answer would be the "interdisciplinary approach" to educational content, which is being implemented across the country. While the precise definition of "interdisciplinary" varies by district, it is generally understood as the integration of outside subjects into any given academic field. For example, teaching history while incorporating aspects of science, or introducing a perspective of art history when teaching English. It is most prevalent in school districts that opt to blend artistic assignments and lessons into their regular curriculum. The history of interdisciplinary history have a history dating back much farther than one may expect. First developed in the 1930s, interdisciplinary courses have grown far more popular than initially anticipated, as school districts strive to provide a progressive education. Integrating arts into academic subjects has a litany of benefits, such as motivating students with alternate learning styles to become more deeply engaged in their course work. As pointed out by one researcher, bringing new fields into established disciplines helps children in recognizing bias. An article published by Carleton College observes that interdisciplinary instruc-

tion "...fits with recent advances in learning science about how to foster learning when students bring powerful pre-existing ideas with them to the learning process." Art as a whole is often representative of minority groups or of people who feel misunderstood due to mental illness, social oppression, or other circumstance that led them to their art. By introducing these stories and concepts into the teaching of kids and teens, it brings a new context to educational content. It makes things relevant by teaching empathy. In addition to providing crucial dimensionality to the core curriculum, adding an interdisciplinary aspect to the classroom may facilitate the development of students' art skills in a safe, academic environment. After all, research proves that art can be both emotionally therapeutic and mentally stimulating for teenagers who are inundated with dense textbook assignments and packets of information. The change of pace is a welcome way to both further the education of students while still maintaining rigorous exploration of traditional subject matter. Interdisciplinary arts education may be seen in a multitude of places around RHS, and even further around the greater Ridgewood School district. For example, programs such as AHLISA (American History with Integrated Study in the Arts) as well as classes such as Engineering and Art enable Ridgewood students to become more deeply

involved in combining passions in different academic disciplines with an aptitude towards the creation and analysis of art. AHLISA is an American History program for sophomores and juniors that incorporates a great deal of artistic expression, such as ballet lessons and field trips to museums. Engineering and Art closely monitors the relationship between physics and art, requiring students to utilize their knowledge of both fields to build structural pieces.

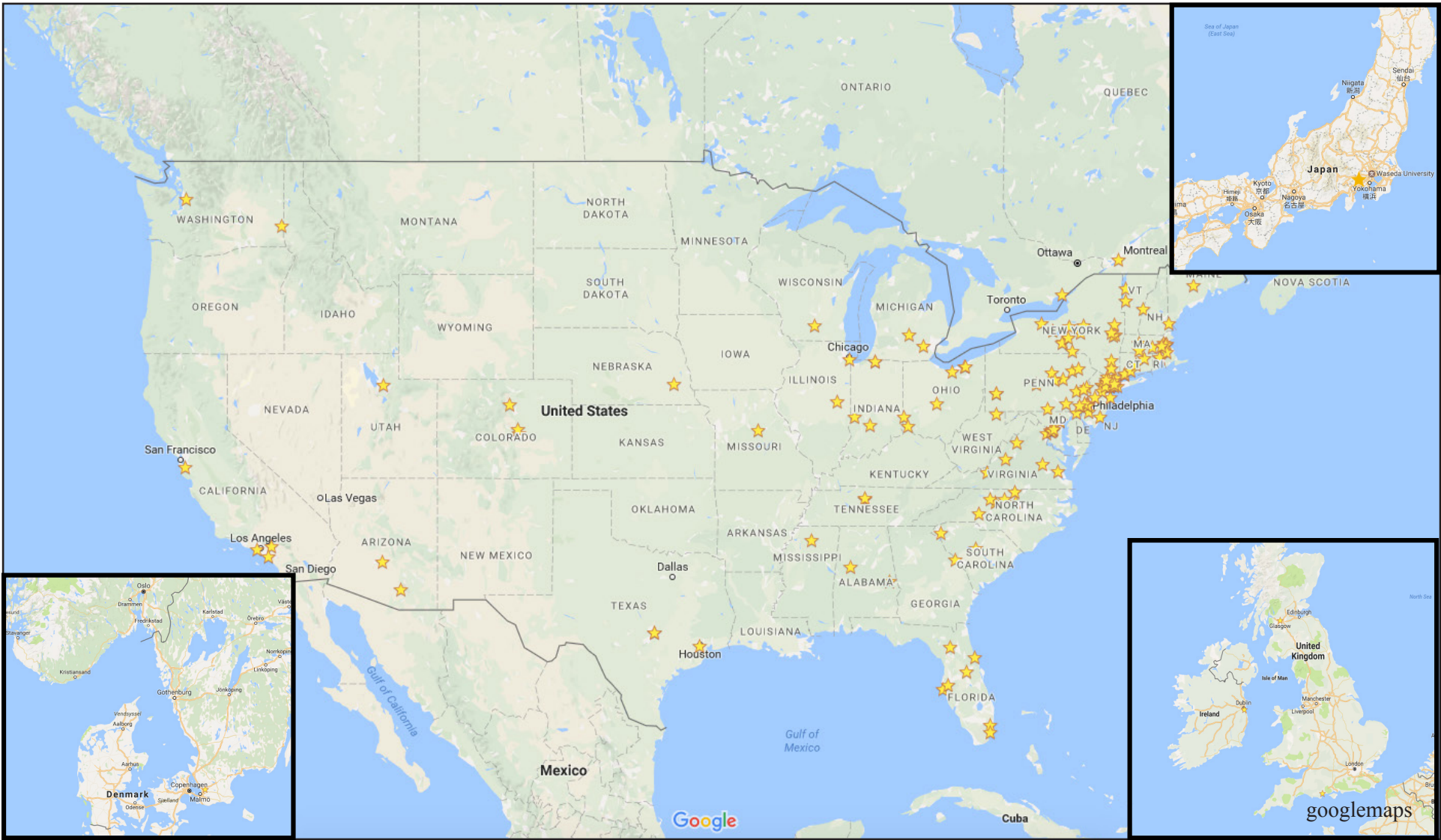
Clearly, the rise of interdisciplinary arts in high schools is a welcome development that is embraced by both student and teacher. It provides copious learning and teaching benefits, and it is intriguing to students. By embracing new styles of teaching and, likewise, new styles of learning, we can create an incredibly sophisticated and progressive learning environment as a country, and as a world.



Jess Chang



# Class of 2017 College Destinations



- |   |                                       |  |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| American University-3                                 | Fordham University-5                  | Queen's University-1                     | University of Chicago-1                      |
| Amherst College-1                                     | Franklin & Marshall College-4         | Ramapo College of New Jersey-5           | University of Cincinnati-1                   |
| Arizona State University-1                            | George Mason University-1             | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute-2       | University of Colorado at Boulder-2          |
| Auburn University-3                                   | Georgetown University-2               | Rice University-1                        | University of Connecticut-5                  |
| Belmont University-1                                  | Georgia Military College-1            | Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology-1    | University of Delaware-9                     |
| Bentley University-1                                  | Gettysburg College-4                  | Rowan University-4                       | University of Florida-2                      |
| Bergen Community College-12                           | Hamilton College- NY-5                | Rutgers University- New Brunswick-29     | University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign-2 |
| Berkley College- Woodbridge-1                         | Harvey Mudd College-1                 | Sacred Heart University-1                | University of Maryland, College Park-9       |
| Binghamton University-1                               | High Point University-2               | Saint Joseph's University-1              | University of Massachusetts, Amherst-6       |
| Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania-1               | Hobart and William Smith Colleges-1   | Sarah Lawrence College-2                 | University of Miami-1                        |
| Boston College-5                                      | Hofstra University-2                  | Seton Hall University-2                  | University of Michigan-11                    |
| Boston University-2                                   | Holy Cross College-1                  | Siena College-2                          | University of Mississippi-1                  |
| Bournemouth University-1                              | Indiana University at Bloomington-1   | Simmons College-1                        | University of Missouri Columbia-1            |
| Brown University-1                                    | Ithaca College-5                      | Skidmore College-1                       | University of Nebraska at Lincoln-1          |
| Bryn Mawr College-1                                   | James Madison University-4            | Sophia University-1                      | University of New Hampshire at Durham-3      |
| Bucknell University-5                                 | John Carroll University-1             | Southern Connecticut State University-1  | University of Notre Dame-2                   |
| Carnegie Mellon University-4                          | John Hopkins University-1             | St. John's University- Queens Campus-2   | University of Pennsylvania-2                 |
| Case Western Reserve University-2                     | Kutztown University of Pennsylvania-1 | Stanford University-1                    | University of Pittsburgh-2                   |
| Central Piedmont Community College-1                  | La Salle University-2                 | State University of New York at Albany-1 | University of Richmond-4                     |
| Clemson University-3                                  | Lafayette College-3                   | Stockton University-1                    | University of South Carolina-6               |
| Colby College-1                                       | Lehigh University-4                   | Stonehill College-1                      | University of Strathclyde-1                  |
| Colgate University-7                                  | Loyola Marymount University-1         | SUNY College at Cortland-1               | University of Utah-1                         |
| College of Mount Saint Vincent-1                      | Loyola University Maryland-1          | SUNY Maritime College-1                  | University of Vermont-2                      |
| College of the Holy Cross-1                           | Lund University-1                     | Syracuse University-7                    | University of Wisconsin, Madison-5           |
| College of William and Mary-1                         | Manhattan School of Music-2           | Temple University-1                      | Valencia College-1                           |
| Colorado College-1                                    | Manhattanville College-1              | The Catholic University of America-2     | Vanderbilt University-1                      |
| Columbia University-1                                 | Mannes College of Music-1             | The College of New Jersey-3              | Villanova University-2                       |
| Cornell University-4                                  | Marist College-7                      | The George Washington University-5       | Virginia Tech-5                              |
| Dartmouth College-2                                   | McGill University-1                   | The Ohio State University-1              | Wake Forest University-1                     |
| Davidson College-1                                    | Miami University, Oxford-2            | The University of Alabama-3              | Waseda University-1                          |
| DigiPen Institute of Technology-1                     | Michigan State University-4           | The University of Arizona-1              | Washington and Lee University-1              |
| Drew University-2                                     | Middlebury College-3                  | The University of Scranton-1             | Washington State University-1                |
| Drexel University-3                                   | Misericordia University-1             | The University of Tampa-1                | Wellesley College-1                          |
| Duke University-1                                     | Monmouth University-1                 | The University of Texas, Austin-1        | Wesleyan University-2                        |
| Eastman School of Music-1                             | Montclair State University-2          | Trinity College-2                        | West Chester University of Pennsylvania-1    |
| Eckerd College-1                                      | New Jersey Institute of Technology-2  | Tulane University-1                      | West Virginia University-2                   |
| Elon University-3                                     | New York University-5                 | Union College (New York)-2               | Western New England University-1             |
| Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University- Daytona Beach-1 | Northeastern University-3             | United States Air Force Academy-1        | William Paterson University of New Jersey-1  |
| Emerson College-1                                     | Nova Southeastern University-1        | United States Military Academy-Army-1    |  |
| Fairfield University-6                                | Oberlin College-1                     | University College Dublin-1              |  |
| Fairleigh Dickinson University- Florham Campus-1      | Pace University, NYC-1                | University of California, Irvine-1       |  |
| Fashion Institute of Technology-1                     | Pennsylvania College of Technology-1  |  |  |
| Felician University-1                                 | Pennsylvania State University-11      |  |  |
|   | Philadelphia University-2             |  |  |
|   | Providence College-3                  |  |  |
|   | Purdue University-1                   |  |  |



After high school, I am taking a gap year in between graduating RHS and entering Wellesley College. In September I am moving to Cochabamba, Bolivia, where I will be working for an NGO that focuses on microfinancing female owned businesses and providing healthcare to women. I lived in Cochabamba when I was 10, so I am very excited to return and immerse myself in Spanish, as well as to travel to other cities in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and Colombia. I will be in South America for six or seven months, and then move to Paris for three months. This part of my plan is more up in the air, but I do know my best friend Blythe and I will finish my gap year with a road trip in Norway.

One of the most important things I've learned during my time at RHS is to be unapologetic. I no longer need or seek the approval from those around me to do what I want, and I don't find use in wasting energy to explain myself for how I choose to live. I've also learned that no one is really what they seem to be, and that it's important to take the time to give people a chance before drawing conclusions.

What I will miss the most about Ridgewood is the depth of the relationships I have with others. Living in one place for this long allows relationships to grow as the individuals do, which while is sometimes unsuccessful, is usually very cool. I will also really miss Tofu House, and the Library. To incoming seniors, in terms of practical, boring advice, start your college applications over the summer. In terms of real advice, feel comfortable with the fact that you, and what you want in life, will change throughout the year. Allow yourself the space to change and to experiment, and try to forgive yourself and others for mistakes of the past. It is not worth the energy to be preoccupied with what others are doing. Do your own thing, whatever it is, and just be a kind person.

-Ana McDade

# Senior Send-Off

Jess Chang

After high school, I will be attending the US Air Force Academy with the plan of serving this great country and playing some lacrosse with my older brother, Griffin, who is currently a cadet there. I could not be more excited to have this opportunity, but I will never forget the great memories that Ridgewood has brought me. On the field or in the classroom, I will never forget the relationships that I have built with my coaches, teachers, and peers. It may have been easy to take the opportunity to attend Ridgewood High School for granted as a young freshman, but from where I am today, I could not be more thankful for the experience that I have had. To incoming seniors, enjoy your last year and don't get caught doing something stupid. Good luck. Reegegege...

-Quin Peene

The common misconception is that Junior year is the hardest year of High School, but anyone who tells you that is wrong. The biggest piece of advice I could give to any incoming senior is to find ways to relax - you'll need it. For me, I added an additional level of stress to my life by deciding to audition for colleges next year. This stress paid off and next year I'll be studying Drama at New York University. Had it not been for the countless hours I spent in the Little Theatre and on the New Players Stage, I don't think I would have developed my passion for theater and my confidence to pursue this field as a career. Some of my favorite High School memories center around New Players, especially our trip to Scotland two summers ago. It was on this trip that I was able to see the influence theater can have around the world. When I'm off at college I think the thing I'll miss most about RHS will be the mints Ms. O'Brien has on her desk. I can't count the number of times I've used those mints to save myself from horrible breath days.

-Michael Crowe

Next year, I will be taking a gap semester and then starting at Middlebury College in February. My high school experience has been pretty consumed by academics and so I'm looking forward to having an extra couple of months to travel or work before I finally start college. I'm going to be spending the summer working in Washington DC, but don't really have any plans after that yet, any suggestions are much appreciated! I feel like I've finally figured out high school and am not ready to leave, but I'm really excited about everything that awaits. I know for incoming seniors this can be a really intimidating time as well, but just know that it all works out in the end!

-Hannah Rigdon





# Please, Tell Me Again How the World is Ending

CJ Lee  
staff writer

I'm someone who loves reading the news. I take advantage of every story about another missile in North Korea, the story behind James Comey, and the latest bombings in Kabul and Manchester. Journalism is as important to me as the Internet is to modern society.

But, I absolutely hate hearing about climate change on the news.

Climate change is one of the most widely-debated and pertinent issues of the 21st century, especially for our generation. It has the potential to force hundreds of species into extinction and create trillions of dollars in environmental damage, everywhere. Significant figures, from Leonardo Dicaprio to Donald Trump, have entire agendas set on either raising awareness of climate change or debunking it as a lie. The signings of legislation on the global stage like the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement are definitely positive upticks, but then comes the issue of actually upholding them (see: Donald Trump threatening to withdraw from COP21 and the new Environmental Protection Agency stripping its website of climate change information). All of this means what you probably already know: in the instance that climate change is real

(see: it is), there are major problems that are going completely unanswered. And soon enough, they won't be answerable. Considering all of this, it seems like climate change would be an issue that I would normally jump at the chance to read about.

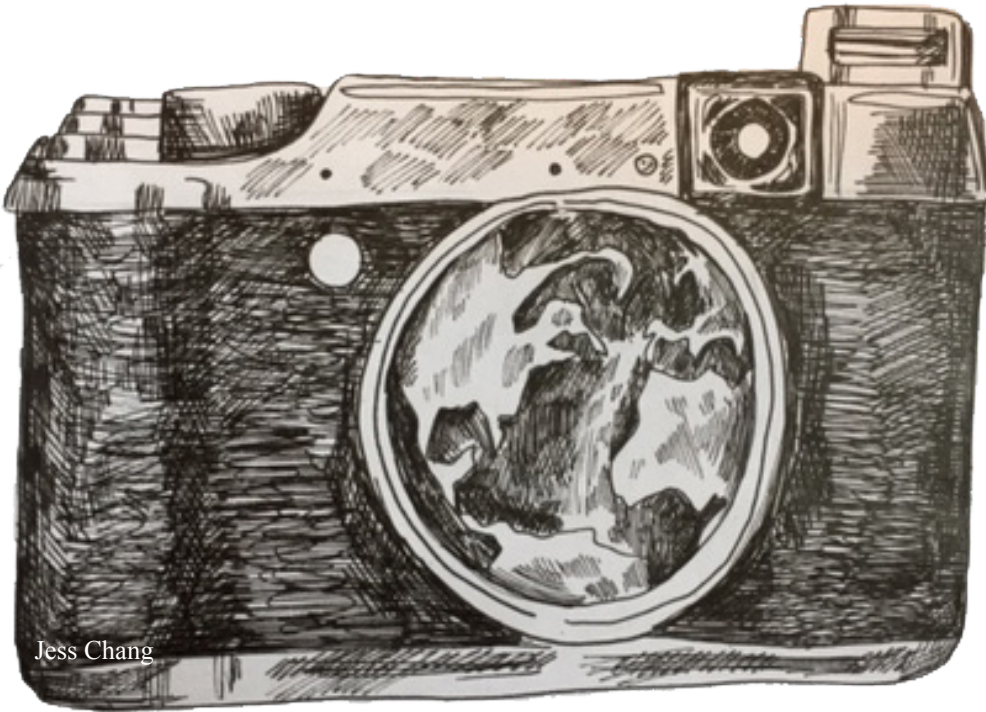
But I don't.  
Climate change is bad. Climate change related news is bad. Let's elaborate.

Allow me to introduce you to media fear tactics.  
It is common knowledge that news outlets capitalize on juicy stories and utilize as much invigorating diction as they can to interest readers. When there is a story that can project a sense of fear to its reader, this behavior from the media increases tenfold. After all, wouldn't you be interested in learning about a topic that seems immediately

threatening to your life? These methods are not exclusive to the media, but they are certainly notorious for them. When an issue like the aforementioned climate change has the potential to affect the entire world, not just a locality, under the lens of views and hits per article, it is promising and intoxicating. In of itself, we should not blame the media for participating in fear tactics, after all they are also corporations in a capitalistic system. But, fear tactics ultimately lead to an overwhelming amount of articles that portray climate change in a pessimistic, point-of-no-return perspective. From titles like Mac McCann's Complex article "Enjoy Earth While It Lasts: Atmospheric Carbon Levels Pass the Point of No Return," to Rachel Becker's The Verge article "A Future of More Extreme Floods, Brought to You by Climate Change," reading climate change news gets old. And I won't even get into the mudslinging involved when you read articles that combine both climate change and politics. Yikes.

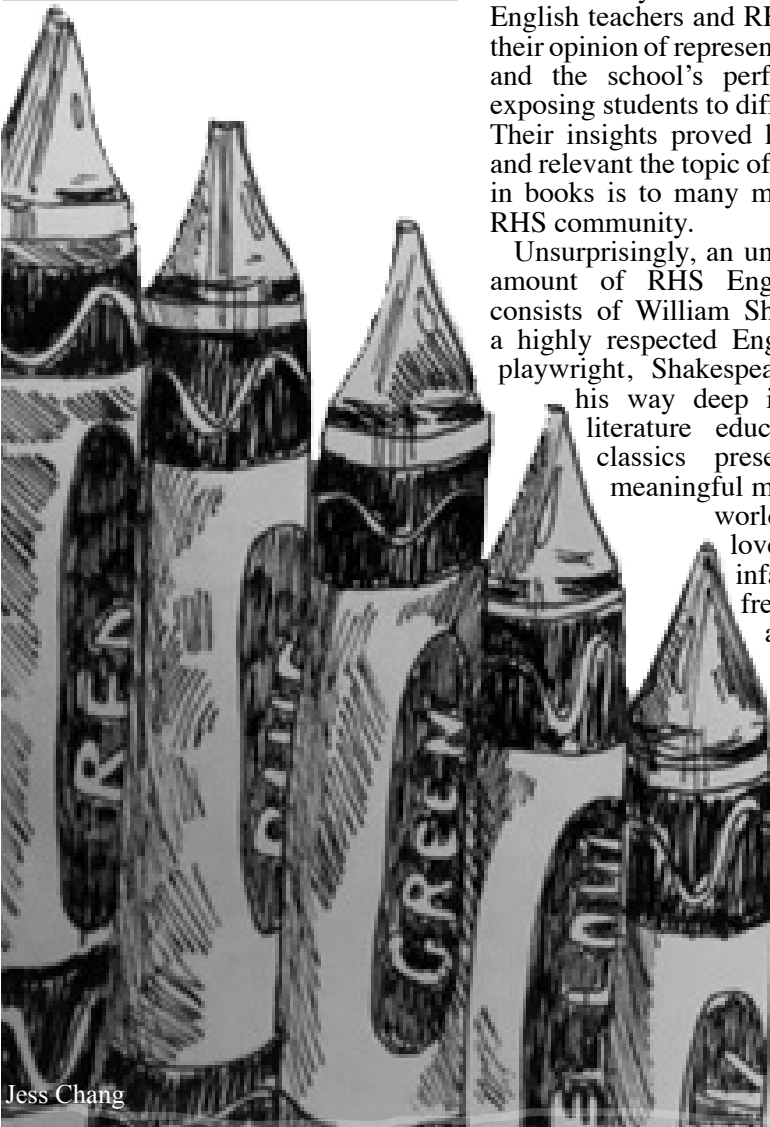
Climate change is an issue that is problematic, complicated, and without an immediate solution. And with climate change initiatives going down the toilet, it appears solutions will not come soon. All this means are more pessimistic, fear-inciting media articles.

Please ignore the fact that this entire article is hypocritical.



## Is Our English Curriculum Diverse Enough?

Janus Kwong  
staff writer



As E. B. White wrote in Charlotte's Web, "With the right words, you can change the world." The purpose of reading a book is to gain different perspectives from characters that teach worldly themes. Here at Ridgewood High School, the English department offers students a largely sophisticated curriculum centering around literature that try to promote these themes. Yet if the books we read only portray the narratives of people of the same race, religion, gender, etc, the objective is lost. As the world around us becomes more accepting and diverse, RHS has a responsibility to take action to vary the content we learn in our English classrooms.

I recently interviewed several English teachers and RHS students on their opinion of representation in books and the school's performance with exposing students to different cultures. Their insights proved how important and relevant the topic of representation in books is to many members of the RHS community.

Unsurprisingly, an undeniably large amount of RHS English curricula consists of William Shakespeare. As a highly respected English poet and playwright, Shakespeare has found his way deep into American literature education, as his classics present numerous meaningful motifs about the world, like true love versus infatuation and free speech under authoratative governments. Yet, as a man who barely left England during a time of white dominance and incredible gender inequality, I wonder if his influence would is in

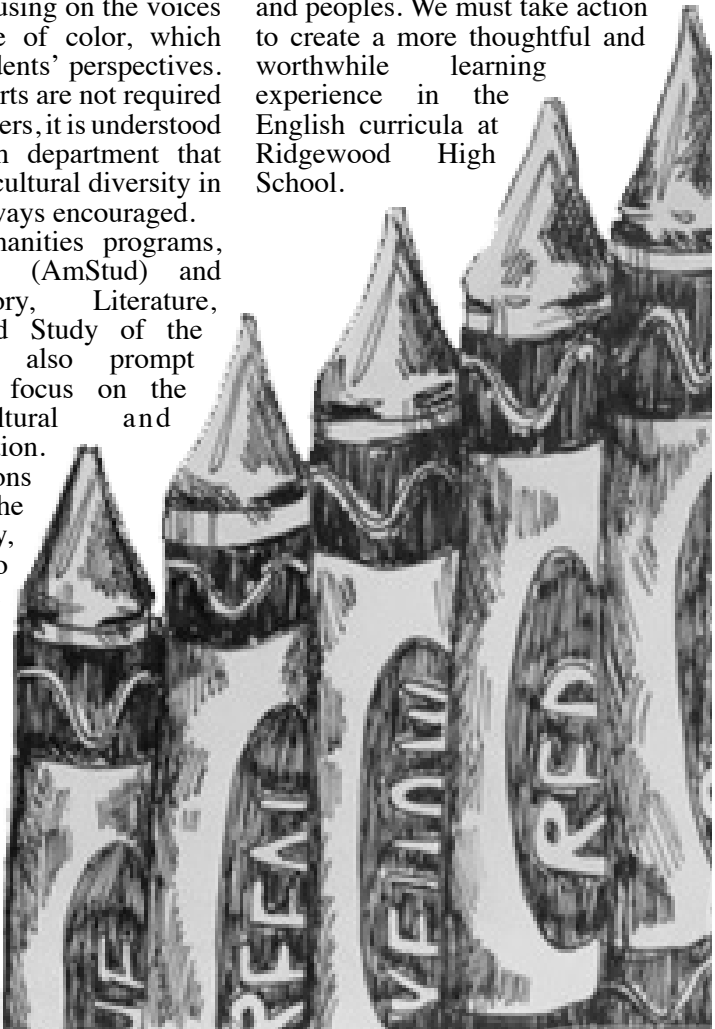
the best interest of the students. Many of my peers and teachers agree with the thought that although the lack of diversity was evident in his works, Shakespeare's ideas are a fundamental part of our society and the subjects presented in his literature are necessary for high schoolers advancing further into academia. However, I also believe that the inclusion of Shakespeare's works does not exclude our consideration for the literature of other eligible authors, especially those who write about underrepresented voices.

Changes are made each year to ensure the best possible English education for RHS students. Individual teachers constantly reflect on the effective manners to teach their students and lead them to worthwhile classroom experiences. Many teachers use their freedom to create projects and unique assignments by focusing on the voices of different people of color, which further expand students' perspectives. Although these efforts are not required of Ridgewood teachers, it is understood among the English department that representation and cultural diversity in the classroom is always encouraged.

Our unique humanities programs, American Studies (AmStud) and American History, Literature, and the Integrated Study of the Arts (AHLISA), also prompt a more in-depth focus on the integration of cultural and racial representation. Projects and lessons focusing on the history of slavery, immigration to America, and waves of feminism are required for students in these programs. An AHLISA project called 12 Years a Slave emphasizes the struggles of slavery. AmStud has an end-of-the-year project where students research and then make a

documentary film on first generation immigrants in America, highlighting their struggles and experiences. Many other electives in the school also provide a variety of exposure and emphasis on different peoples of color.

While most teachers have experienced a large-scale improvement in representation during their tenure at RHS, many students think that there is still more work to be done. Students are willing to accept new changes and dynamics in the classics we read in high school. Overall, Ridgewood High School fosters diverse thought and has spaces that challenge our biases, as any proficient educational institution should. We are given so many opportunities as students to explore and widen our worldview, however there is always more to learn and understand about different cultures and peoples. We must take action to create a more thoughtful and worthwhile learning experience in the English curricula at Ridgewood High School.





# Success in Philly for Ridgewood Crew

Henry Koontz  
staff writer

On Friday, May 19th and Saturday, May 20th, the Ridgewood Crew team travelled down to the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia to attend the annual Stotesbury Cup Regatta, the largest high school rowing regatta in the world, with almost 200 teams and over 5,000 athletes in attendance. Since 1926, the Stotesbury Cup has been one of the most prestigious scholastic regattas, attracting some of the top rowers in the country. A victory at Stotesbury is one of the highest honors a scholastic rower can achieve, and will put them among the best high school rowers in the country. Ridgewood sent a total of 14 boats to the Regatta, including eight varsity boats, four junior varsity boats, and two freshman boats. 11 of these boats advanced to the semi-final rounds on Friday afternoon and Saturday Morning. Of the 11, eight boats made it to their respective finals. The finals in which these rowers competed in on Saturday afternoon showcased some of the fastest crews in the country, with rowers from as far away as Canada, Texas, and Florida competing for gold. Ridgewood Crew had a strong first finals race, with the girls JV double of Alexandra Walton Roth and Maddie Gibson holding off a fast approaching Springside-chestnut hill crew to take 3rd place. Later in the afternoon, the girls varsity double of Claire Callaghan and Jordan Wittmaack had an exceptional



Spencer Campbell and Sam Daspin Approach the Finish Line.

race, coming back from 4th place in the last 500 meters to win their race. Both of these senior rowers had experienced success at Stotesbury before, having both received silver medals in their Freshman and Sophomore years. However, neither had came in first, and both were ecstatic to receive their gold medals and the Lovey Farrell Cup award. Bridget Callaghan (Claire’s older sis-

ter) had won the same award two years prior with her partner Julia Heffron. Many other boats had strong performances as well. The JV boys quad and the Varsity girls quad both took fourth in their races and the boys lightweight double, girls lightweight double, and boys varsity single all took fifth in their races. Overall, Ridgewood had a very

strong performance. Head Coach Boris Roque-Alvarez proudly commented, “It was amazing that we were able to get so many crews into the semi-finals and finals, and we are proud of all of our athletes.” With Stotesbury behind them, boats that have qualified for Youth Nationals are working harder than ever for their last regatta of the season.

# Sports Psychology: A New Tool for RHS Lax?

Brendan Keane  
sports editor

Along with a number of other changes (including a new defensive coordinator), the Ridgewood High School’s men’s lacrosse team began the 2017 season with another, rather unique, addition to the team’s coaching staff. This most recent change does not regard the traditional field coaches, however; it lies very much off the field and instead concerns the minds of the players. Gregory Chertok, M.Ed, has been brought on as a sports psychologist for RHS lacrosse’s 2017 season. First introduced to the United States in the early 20th century, sports psychology is the study of how psychological factors impact an athlete’s physical and mental performance. From addressing issues concerning team communication and psychological state, to assisting individual athletes overcome hurdles such as injury, mental trauma, or the psychological effects of intense training, the applications of sports psychology are broad. For Gregory Chertok, meeting the task of his job means working in parallel with strength and conditioning coaches: “If you were to work with a strength coach and they were to give you physical exercises to get physically stronger, a mental skills trainer (sports psychologist) equips an athlete with exercises to assist with focus, confidence, or attentional control or even managing anger.” The physical and mental sides of athletic performance go hand in hand. Coach Chertok attributes his interest in sports psychology to personal challenges with his own mental state that he faced while participating in sports at the high school and collegiate levels. “I played baseball growing up. I was a good player but I was a mental player; I’d always get in my own way... so when I began to appreciate the fact

that the way I think affected the way I played, that made me seriously consider it as a profession.” Since this first spark of interest in the world of sports psychology, Chertok has gone on to receive his Bachelor’s degree in Psychology at Tufts University and his M.Ed. in sports and exercise psychology from Boston University. Currently, along with his role as sports psychologist for Ridgewood’s lacrosse

team, Chertok is the director of mental training at the tennis academy “Court Sense,” a high-powered tennis training center focused on producing professional tennis players. Though Coach Chertok recognizes that tennis, as an individual sport, has intensely different mental aspects than a team sport such as lacrosse, he still is applies his practices to the larger team environment, working with the RHS men’s



lacrosse team on issues like cohesion, communication, and mental toughness. Members of the Ridgewood athletic community are curious as to why Coach Chertok is being introduced for this lacrosse season. To many, having a sports psychologist join a program indicates that something about the athletics program is problematic. To Chertok, however, this is not the case: “You don’t go to a nutritionist because you are nutritionally weak. You go to a nutritionist to get an edge so you can improve your nutrition. When teams hire me, they aren’t hiring me to solve problems, but rather to give the team a psychological edge. Even olympians regularly work with sports psychologists, but that doesn’t make them weak.” Unlike traditional coaches who often focus on the physical side of athletics, Chertok has to take a more unique approach to help the athletes and teams he works with succeed. He has met with the Ridgewood lacrosse team 6 times throughout the course of their season, and in each lesson has focused on psychological skills like focus, mental endurance, teamwork, and mental control. A primary mental exercise that he has done with the team is asking them to envision a number, between 1 and 10. Essentially the number represents how calm or energized a player needs to be to perform at his best (10 is not always the correct answer). This method has helped Ridgewood lacrosse players mentally prepare for games, and has been a common talking point of coach Pounds throughout the season. Coach Chertok is an addition to the Ridgewood men’s lacrosse team’s coaching staff that reflects changing attitudes in the world of athletic training and team performance. Programs are beginning to recognize that time spent on the field and in the weight room is not the only tool to strengthen performance: psychological health plays an equal role.



# Class of 2017 Rewind

Trends and events that most impacted RHS students from 2013 to now

