

# Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

2017-2018 Issue

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

December 14, 2017

## Teacher Interviews Part III: Have You Met Mr. Herrick?

Clara Rapoport and Peyton Applegate, Sophomore Reporters

We decided to interview Mr. Herrick, a science teacher at the high school who taught us biology when we were freshmen. We knew this was only his second year at MHS, and we wanted to know about his experience and reflections so far. We asked him how he got into teaching, about some of his memories as a teacher at this high school and at the previous school where he taught.

S: Why did you get into this profession?

T: Because I love teaching kids. I enjoy seeing them learn and seeing them kind of grow, not only as students, but as individuals.

S: What is your favorite teaching memory?

T: My favorite Bio memory, especially in your class, was how you looked at me like I had three heads at the beginning of the year, but towards the end of the year you guys did a project, the transcription and translation project, where you did a video or song. I remember you wrote a song and played on the guitar, Peyton! You put words to these songs and all of a sudden you go from these students who kind of look at me starry eyed like you don't know what is going on. But in the end, you were able to produce something that you created on your own.

S: What is your funniest teaching memory?

T: Well, I'm sure you know this, but I make a lot of mistakes and I use those mistakes as an opportunity for, not only to learn, but for you guys to see that we, as adults, also make mistakes. So I don't mind making fun of myself.

S: What is the weirdest thing that has happened to you at this school?

T: I mean there is simple stuff, for example, tomorrow is pajama day. I don't quite understand how I'm supposed to be professional in pajamas. So that's kind of weird. Also, when I started here, I got to take my own crash course in infectious disease so that I could teach it to others, which was a very "interesting" experience and it got me to really challenge myself.

## Free Speech?

Jillian Lederman, Sophomore Reporter

On Thursday, December 7, 2017, students attending Fordham University in New York City were ordered to leave the campus's student-run coffee shop, Rodrigue's Coffee House, where they were sitting quietly at a table. A video of the encounter catches an employee approaching the students, all of whom sported "Make America Great Again" hats, and informing them that they were "wearing hats that completely violate[d] safe space policy." She went on to say that the men had to take the accessories off or leave the premises.

This video was first shown by the website Campus Reform, which reported that the group of students were given a handout called "Rodrigue's Coffee Shop has a safer space policy," describing the store's prohibition of racism, sexism, and homophobia. However, Bob Howe, a Fordham spokesman, later stated that the policy in question does not exist on campus.

Although this situation is unquestionably tied to politics, it is not necessary to be part of a certain political group to condemn or support the action taken. Recently, a similar instance involving NFL players kneeling for the national anthem was highly contested. Although this issue arose from the opposite end of the political spectrum, it raised similar questions about the legality and morality of controversial speech.

To analyze these two situations, it is first necessary to define free speech. According to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, American citizens are permitted by law to publicly express any opinions that they hold without government interference. This right extends to every form of speech, including hate speech. It is only restricted when it incites violence. In other words, one is not allowed to shout "fire" in a crowded theater. Therefore, freedom of speech, as defined by law, includes the right of football players to kneel during the national anthem and the right of university students to wear "Make America Great Again" hats, no matter how controversial or offensive their messages may be to some people. The legal perspective is extremely complicated because there is some debate as to whether private institutions like the NFL and Fordham University are allowed to make decisions regarding people speaking on their property. Less complicated is the question of whether punishing people for advocating their beliefs peacefully is morally right.

What distinguishes America from many countries around the world is that it protects offensive speech. America is a melting pot, not only of different races and ethnicities, but of opinions. Freedom of speech was not designed to protect compliments. It was intended to defend the most awful people saying the most offensive things imaginable. For a free society to remain free, it is essential that peaceful speech not be restricted in any way. Prepare to be offended, whether it be by a "Make America Great Again" hat or a team of football players refusing to stand for the national anthem. Instead of outlawing controversial speech, we should welcome it, and welcome the interesting conversations generated as a result. In America, speech is lawful until it is violent, not until it is offensive.

## Quote of the Week

*"My humanity is bound up in yours,  
for we can only be human together."*  
~ Desmond Tutu

## We Stand with Them: An Account of Marblehead High School's Racial Protest

Sophie Hauck, Freshman Reporter

At around 10 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6, rumors were rapidly spreading. "Walkout protest at Marblehead High School, 12 p.m. tomorrow," various posts on social media read. "To stand in solidarity with a minority member(s) being called the N-word on school grounds."

The response was quick, many students asking if others were participating. Their answers? While some knew immediately that they wanted to participate, many were unsure, citing possible punishment as an excuse. Most were confused. Could you walk back in later? Would it be considered cutting? These questions continued at school on Thursday. In every class, someone had something to say about it, whether it was a rumor about the initial occurrence that sparked the walkout, or their opinion on the whole matter. "It's not my battle to fight," some could be heard saying, while others insisted that it was everyone's battle to fight.

As 12 o'clock approached, the conversation continued. In the last minutes of fourth period, administrators informed teachers that the walkout would be held for ten minutes, and that those who missed class to attend would be considered cutting. Nevertheless, the students' voices would be heard. At 11:56 a.m., the bell for 12 p.m. classes rang, and students attending the rally filtered into the lobby. The sight that greeted them was dramatic.

Students lined the staircase that led from the art wing to the lobby, gazing down on the crowd below. Supporters filled the space, from the doors leading to the outside to the cafeteria. In four minutes it would be 12 o'clock and students could go outside. Until then, they packed together in clusters, discussing the scene. The students were visibly excited, nervous grins on their faces. Many phones were raised as people tried to capture the scene for social media. Others checked the time. "One minute!" someone shouted, and cheers erupted throughout the crowd. Despite the early critics of this event, there looked to be more than 200 students in the lobby, many of whom had not initially planned on attending. In the seconds before 12 p.m., students counted down before ultimately rushing out of the building. The walkout had begun.

As people moved towards the island in the front circle, leading protesters, most of whom were people of color, stood atop the stone wall in the middle of the island. Some held up signs proclaiming messages of frustration in the current racial climate at MHS, including, "Ignorance is NOT bliss, MHS," and "Racism is never justifiable," while all wore black clothing.

After minutes of cheering, protest leaders took turns talking, speaking on issues including the racial tension they had faced as they grew up in the Marblehead Public School system, as well as the wrongness of using the n-word. One student speaker, senior Kenneth Buford, spoke of his upset with the school, not only regarding their response to these incidents, but their failure to recognize the ongoing intolerant climate of MHS. "We shouldn't have to wait until 10 p.m. for an email addressing this," he said, "We shouldn't have to wait until a walkout."

After students finished speaking, the march began. The protest leaders headed toward the field, although it was unclear where their final destination was. Despite this, most students followed them, resolute in this mission of racial and school-wide unity. Students passed the football field, nearing two possible turns, one that would lead off campus, the other that would stay on school property. Except for a few individuals who were likely not there to support the cause, the protesters stayed on campus, following a pathway that would pass the cafeteria before continuing around to the front once more. As students passed by the cafeteria, teachers waved from the windows, cheering on the empowered students. Finally, they rounded the bend, reaching the place where the protest had begun. Students gathered once more, waiting for further instruction from the protest leaders. One protest leader thanked the students for coming out. While they were welcome to go back inside, "We're going to continue because we're not done with this." Many freshmen went back to class, fearing potential punishment. Still, approximately 100 students followed the protest leaders on another lap around the school, this one including a detour to the section of Piper Field behind the high school. Ultimately all protesters returned to complete their day of classes.

In the periods afterwards, the students who attended the rally shared the feelings of empowerment that came with participating. "It felt like we were changing the world," said some.

Organizers Nakyla Washington, Gileeza Goorahal, and Tamelle Platt planned this entire protest within 24 hours, an event that was unique to Marblehead High School. While it is clear that the students are empowered to continue the conversation on racial tension, the administration's response has yet to come.

But in the coming weeks, the school will propose their solution. The adults will continue to write articles featuring their thoughts. The parents will convey their disappointment in the school. And although this response is fair, their answers are not our answers. Their opinions are not our opinions. Their story is not our story. This is a student movement, a conversation that will only succeed if maintained by its students. This is our school, these are our peers, and we stand with them.

## Progressive Dinner 2017

Emma Szalewicz, Senior Editor-in-Chief

Ecstatic from the Powderpuff game win, the Senior Class piled into cars and drove to Eleanor Mancusi-Ungaro's house on Orchard Circle. They celebrated by enjoying many different appetizers and conversing with friends. The seniors were joined by most of the teachers from the English department, including Mr. Ryan, Ms. Skeffington, Ms. Feins, Ms. Jones, Mrs. Billings, Mr. Dillon, Mrs. Sholds, the two librarians, Mrs. Shattford and Mrs. Klipper, and math teacher and photographer Mr. Dana. At 8 o'clock sharp, the seniors started loading up into cars once again, this time, heading to Averi Kaplowitch's house on Camille Terrace. The students were welcomed by Averi's brothers on the porch, and stepped inside the roomy house to see tables piled with entrees. Once inside, groups had the options of staying on the first floor, heading into the basement, or sitting in the garage. Mr. Bauer was also there to say hello. After everyone was full, the senior class took a short walk from Averi's house to Katie Knight's house on Stratford Road. There, everyone was overwhelmed with the plethora of desserts to choose from! With plates piled high, the seniors listened as the Powderpuff coaches announced the winners of the Powderpuff Awards, accompanied by hall monitor Al Doherty and Spanish teacher Mrs. Sliney. The senior class left Katie's house full and content, proud of their win.

## Headlight Staff 2017-2018

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF: Sophie Mae Berman, Emma Szalewicz, Lilly Tapper

REPORTERS IN THE FIELD: Peyton Applegate, Shelby Casimir, Aidan Collins, Sophie Hauck, Paul Heffernan, Jillian Lederman, Alix Livermore, Kate Lothrop, Clara Rapoport, Adam Sherf, Michael Simmons, Kristy Twaalfhoven, Adri Ustick

FACULTY ADVISOR: Thomas Higgins