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# VIEWS ON THE NEWS



LEX WEEKLY

The illustration shows a stylized newspaper layout with a masthead, a large rectangular area for a main article, and a grid of smaller rectangular sections for columns of text or images. The lines are white on a red background.



# Views on the News

Selected Student Responses  
from the Lexington Weekly Blog  
of Manhattan High School for Girls

# Message from the Principal

The speed at which news travels today is unprecedented. As growing, thinking people and as Jews, we have a responsibility to understand how the world is being shaped and how it is shaping us. Every new method of communication that allows us to share more extensively reminds us that the technology is new but the moral challenge is old.

I am filled with pride, watching our girls share ideas, think outside themselves, and engage in the world in a mindful and respectful way. Thank you to Mrs. Jackie Rosensweig, our History Chair, for deepening a broader awareness within our girls and for creating a space for them to share their ideas with dignity.

Mrs. Estee Friedman-Stefansky  
Principal  
General Studies

# Foreword

Scholars and analysts in a wide range of fields all agree that the current historical moment is particularly volatile and dynamic. The election of Donald Trump has overturned not just the conventional wisdom of poll analysts, but continues overturning a fair amount of political norms. The Trump presidency has rightfully dominated headlines this year, with its unique potential to pass legislation (perhaps), its radical new approach to American identity and our global role, and its embarrassing endless circus of oval-office intrigue.

But Donald Trump is not a cause of the times; he is just one symptom among many. In the past year, politics in Europe have been just as volatile as those in America, if not more. Western society continues to struggle in more open confrontation with the identity crisis that modern liberalism is posed by the challenge of non-Westernized citizens and particularly from jihadist terror. Rogue states like North Korea and Iran continue to stymie the international community in organizing collective responses to their provocations. Beyond political threats, the global economy is increasingly challenged by the benefits and pressures of global free trade, the specter of automated work, the increasing role technology plays in organizing modern lives, and the ethical questions posed by the immense capabilities of cutting-edge medicine. Soon we may see great benefits and also great challenges in self-driving cars, increased space travel, gene editing, robots overtaking work, drone delivery of goods, smart homes, artificial intelligence, and companies such as Amazon, Apple and Google wielding unthinkable influence over individuals' lives..

Historians will quite literally look back at 2017 as a time when much of the proverbial rug was pulled out from beneath the feet of mankind. We can hope that future society will look back and see Hashem's hand guiding our fast-changing times to very good conclusions.

Until then, we can appreciate our students' insightful comments provided on Lexington Weekly. The following collection features some of the strongest and most original insights of students, posted as comments on news posts

to the school's very own current events blog. This collection features brief summaries of many of the top stories covered on the blog this year, with a selection of the strongest comments, slightly edited for readability. Please read, enjoy, and share in our school's community of geopolitical and global literacy.

Mrs. Jackie Rosensweig  
*History Department Chair, Lexington Weekly Faculty*

## 2016 IN REVIEW: MURDER ON THE RISE IN CHICAGO, BUT NOT IN NYC

Crime rates nationwide experienced a small uptick in 2015 and 2016, perhaps reflecting more timid policing policies in reaction to the Black Lives Matter movement. However, these changes have not been experienced evenly in America's major cities. New York City, which has enacted less hands-on policing under Mayor Bill de Blasio, has somehow been spared the murder spike that has affected Chicago, which has similar policies.

*“NYC’s crime rate may be lower because we have grown in the amount of police stationed by every corner and all around the city since September 2011. Chicago police seem to be frightened to take the necessary action because they are afraid of it being recorded and going viral. I think there are probably some other methods how police can take action and not get into trouble for it.”*

– Lele Book, Grade 10



# CONSERVATIVE COLLEGE STUDENTS CLAIM THE NEED FOR SAFE SPACES ON CAMPUS

Secular college campuses are supposed to be places of open tolerance for all ideas, no matter how unpopular they are. In 2017, following mass protests and riots of conservative speakers on college campuses, some conservative and Republican college students have begun to demand “safe spaces” designated for the expression of their views without being subject to attack.

*“It’s not surprising that conservative thinkers feel the need for a safe environment to escape the wrath of liberals. Liberals have always been tolerant of everyone; unless they were less liberal than themselves. But safe spaces are not the answer, because liberals will know who is part of a conservative safe space, and they can treat them miserably as a result. They don’t have to hear the conservatives actually say it, as they know what they stand for. The reality is that in today’s world, being a conservative thinker is just not safe.”*

– Devorah Pinczower, Grade 12

*“I think the safe places would actually hurt the campus because when you have safe places, the purpose is to unite, but by having them, people are being separated and placed ‘where they belong’. Therefore, people will be even more discriminatory and start feeling either more inferior or superior. Faculty aren’t themselves the problem; however, a more diverse faculty with different political views will provide a better ‘education’ for the students about different ideas and views.”*

– Odelia Barsky, Grade 10



# NEW JOBS ON THE RISE, BUT DO MEN WANT PINK-COLLAR JOBS?

America's labor force is at a crossroads. Far too many men of working-age are unemployed as manufacturing jobs disappear. These men are not college-educated and they seek jobs that offer middle-class pay. The job market is recovering and adding numerous jobs, but many of them are either very low-paying, or so-called "pink collar" service jobs that are middle-class paying, but require a college education and are typically staffed by women. It is unclear how unemployed men will adapt to this labor market.

*"In a day and age where gender equality is all the rage, it is ironic that men may feel uncomfortable taking on specific roles within society, viewing them as pink-collar jobs. At the end of the day, if women have been able to break down gender roles in the office, men should be able to do the same in hospitals and the like. Vis-a-vis the wage argument: there are plenty of male dominated occupations that pay far less than healthcare providers do, such as janitors and construction workers."*

— Shalva Gozland, Grade 12



# PEOPLE WHO LEAVE STAY A LOT CLOSER THAN THEY USED TO

With the help of digital communication and family WhatsApp groups, sociologists are discovering that ties of family and friendship are remaining stronger for people who move internationally. This trend is obviously positive for those who would miss their long-lost family and friends. It also poses challenges to Western countries' abilities to acculturate immigrants, or even for camps and sleep-away schools to inculcate the values that they seek to instill in students far away from home influence.

*"I think that easier communication between immigrants' original countries and families will not hinder their assimilation into American society, nor that they should need to assimilate. Even if an immigrant is able to communicate with their family twice a week instead of twice a month, they ultimately are living in America and need to go through their everyday life here. Yes, they may have a stronger connection to their home, but at the end of the day, their main lives are in America. Also, a big part of America's culture is based on immigrants and their contributions to the diversity of America. American culture at its core is cut and pasted from many countries all over the world."*

– Nev Sivan Yakubov, Grade 11

*"With regard to Seminary, the updated technology enables students' family members to be calmer knowing immediately that their child is safe in a scary country. Drawbacks are that girls might not become independent because they are always connected to their parents. They may also fail to really appreciate the rich Israeli culture because they are so connected to what is happening in America. However, I think the benefits of this instant communication outweigh the minor drawbacks."*

*This ability to be in constant communication is a brocha that needs to be used properly. I do agree that because of the easy communication it makes it much harder for people to acclimate to new cultures. So yes, Middle Eastern refugees will have a greater chance of staying strong to their roots and not changing to fit the environment of their new home country. But imagine if Jewish refugees after World War II had this kind of communication- would there have been such a large amount of assimilation?"*

*– Baila Schuster, grade 12*

# SOME MEANINGFUL WAYS TO PREDICT THE FUTURE WITH REGARD TO THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

As Donald Trump was inaugurated to the Presidency, students considered a list article by Nate Silver which laid out 14 possible directions for his administration, ranging from great success to impeachment, and many possibilities in between.

*“I believe that if President Trump mellows out, slightly as Nate Silver puts it, then he has the potential of being a successful president. He is adept at negotiating and making deals which is what needs to happen at the end of the day. Hopefully someone will handle his social media accounts and he can focus on important issues as he has already started to do. He has signed many executive orders in a very short amount of time which means that he does not plan on just talking about change, he is actually doing something about what he believes will be best for America.”*

— Noa Garfinkel, Grade 10



# JUDGE NEIL GORSUCH NOMINATED FOR VACANT SEAT ON SUPREME COURT

Neil Gorsuch was nominated by President Trump to fill the Supreme Court vacancy created last spring by the death of Antonin Scalia. Gorsuch is an experienced and well-regarded judge with a conservative judicial philosophy. His nomination was confirmed by the Senate, but it required a change in Senate procedure to allow a simple 50+ majority vote to pass and to disallow the filibuster procedure, which was used to block votes until they had a 60+ majority.

*“The Senators should stop placing their focus on whether a given nominee is of their respective political party. Instead they should focus on who is most fit for the job and will uphold the law best. What with all the voting going on in the Senate, any Justice is bound to be partial towards those who appointed him/ her. We need people who will not twist the law to meet the executive and legislative branches’ whims, but will rather interpret the law as it was originally intended by our founding fathers. Neil Gorsuch will probably be similar to the late Justice Scalia in that he will uphold the law without partiality, just as Scalia did.”*

— Sara Nordlicht, Grade 9



# TRUMP ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER BANNING IMMIGRATION FROM SEVEN COUNTRIES

In line with campaign promises, one of President Trump's first executive orders was a temporary ban on entry to America for travelers from seven majority-Muslim countries that are particularly war-torn and disorganized. The ban did not affect travelers from the largest Muslim countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The ban was meant to stop all Syrian refugees for the time being. Judges on a few different levels of the federal court system have struck down the executive order (and the second version of it that followed), claiming that the President's intent, as expressed on the campaign trail, is enough to construe the laws as religious discrimination. The bans will be considered by the Supreme Court.

*“Immigrating to America is a privilege, not a right. It is the president’s highest duty to ensure the safety and security of the American people, especially in the wake of atrocious Muslim terror attacks. Yes, we are a country of immigrants, but we are also a country of law and order. Immigrants are welcome, so long as they come to our country legally, and for the right reasons. Let us recall that Clinton embraced these very same ideas in his 1995 State of the Union, and even received a standing ovation from Congress. When Trump shares similar views, however, he receives nonstop flak from the leftist liberals. Consistency, people. Consistency.”*

— Shalva Gozland, Grade 12

# SWISS COURT RULES THAT MUSLIM CHILDREN MUST ATTEND PUBLIC SCHOOL'S CO-ED SWIMMING LESSONS

European countries with growing Muslim minorities are making attempts to acculturate them, but these efforts can sometimes backfire. In Switzerland, a Muslim family sued the state public schools over a policy requiring their daughters to participate in mixed-gender swimming lessons in order to fulfil physical education requirements. The courts ruled in favor of the public schools, and Muslim children (or others who request modest swimming arrangements) are granted no exceptions to the state gym requirements.

*“This story really saddens me. If some freedoms start becoming prioritized over others, our world can start becoming very scary. Perhaps Orthodox nurses may start to be required to wear traditional scrubs in the hospital- which include pants, because the hospital believes that one’s freedom of religion can be compromised for the hospital’s sanitation requirements. As Orthodox Jews, stories like this should shake us. While we are (thank G-d) privileged enough to be able to attend a school that follows the guidelines of our religion, there are so many Muslim immigrants who don’t have the means to attend private schools. The Swiss government had so many other options. They could have told the girls that they could perform another form of exercise in place of the swimming lessons, they could have let them sit out and proposed that they have private swimming lessons after school. Forcing them to compromise their beliefs in order for them to be more school spirited is unacceptable.”*



— Bryna Greenberg, Grade 12

# HOMELAND SECURITY PREPARES FOR MORE ROBUST DEPORTATION OF ILLEGAL RESIDENTS

Under the Trump Administration, the Department of Homeland Security has begun a more intensive effort to deport illegal immigrants. So far, the numbers indicate that deportations are increasing, however not by a drastic margin over past rates. It also appears that many Central American aliens in America have left the country voluntarily or are no longer attempting illegal border crossings, since they are more afraid of American policy under Trump. After initially deporting a child migrant (now adult) living in America, Trump now claims that those who entered the country as children will not be deported.

*“On the one hand, illegal immigrants help the economy because there are more workers and they are probably willing to work for less money. However, they are taking jobs away from legal citizens, and that is hurting the economy. Either way, I believe laws should be amended for people who came as children. Many children did not have a choice of coming here, and now that they have been here it is not right to deport them. Additionally, we are a country that is a land of immigrants, and so I think that the previous administration allowed illegal immigrants because they focused more on the ideals of the country rather than the law of their illegal status.”*

— Rachel Klamen, Grade 12

*“The problem with illegal immigrants is a problem that, in my opinion, should have been taken care of earlier but now it has just gotten out of hand. Now that there are already 11 million illegals living in our territory, it is too late to possibly get rid of all of them. Therefore, I think it is smart to begin with deporting the criminal immigrants because not only are they here illegally, but they are causing us issues. I think that illegal immigration could be bad for the economy because they are taking away jobs that can be replaced with our own citizens.”*

— Avigail Spira, Grade 11



*“This topic is far too complicated to just give a simple answer. A law must be treated as a law and therefore we cannot just be dismissive of the fact that illegal immigrants are in fact illegal. However before one decides that it is necessary to deport all illegal immigrants we do have to consider that these are in fact people and there should perhaps be stricter guidelines of who may be deported, or at least who the first illegal immigrants to be deported are. Also, even though these immigrants in general may seem to take away from economic opportunity, they do help boost the economy to a certain extent. Therefore, a better approach may be to work on reducing the new amount of illegal immigrants from entering instead of focusing on deporting so many more than is customary.”*

— Ashira Feld, Grade 12

# IRAN TESTS MISSILES, ALSO TESTING AMERICAN REACTIONS

In the early weeks of the Trump Administration, Iran tested several long-range missiles capable of carrying powerful bombs. Although these tests were not, strictly speaking, against the terms of the 2015 Iran Deal, they certainly violated the deal in spirit and raised the concerns of the Western world that Iran will violate the deal if only to test the waters and see if the west will react at all. Donald Trump responded by putting some sanctions back into place against Iran, although the crippling international sanctions of pre-2015 were not put back into place.

*“Iran wanted to test the reaction of the new American administration to their threat. They wanted to scare the administration by testing these missiles. They are claiming them to be legal as part of the Iran Deal, but I wonder if they really are. I wonder if they have more plans of trying to show their power. I think they were successful in making a statement of their power and testing the reaction of the American administration.”*

– Zahava Giloni, Grade 9



## TRAFFIC FATALITIES RISE FOR SECOND YEAR IN A ROW

After many years of increasing road safety, as of 2015 and 2016, Americans are at greater risk of car accidents than they were previously. Some suggest that improving economic conditions are causing more people to take to the roads—both for commuting and leisure—leading to more deaths. Others propose that distracted driving and the use of smart phones while driving are the main causes for this distressing trend.

*“I definitely agree with Sari [Dubin]: just like there is airplane mode, phones should start having car mode which will disconnect you from getting texts or anything distracting. Although this might be inconvenient and hard to adjust to, it will make the roads a place that is much safer to be on. More laws should be established to ensure safety for drivers and passengers in order to decrease the percentage of accidents that occur daily.”*

— Becky Masar, Grade 10



# TERRORIST ATTACK IN LONDON KILLS FOUR

In March, a Muslim terrorist attacked pedestrians with a vehicle and knife across the street from British Parliament in London. It was the first significant terrorist attack in Great Britain since 2005. Although this attacker seems to have been working alone, it was followed by two more attacks in May and June, at a concert in Manchester and on London Bridge, respectively. The latter two attacks were coordinated by the Islamic State. Great Britain, which had until now seemed to be spared the unrest seen in France and other countries, now must figure out how to combat its terror threats, how to catch terrorists before they commit their crimes, and how to balance civil liberties in the process.

*“My father was in London last week for a business trip and I kept on thinking about how lucky he was to leave before the terrorist attack. But truthfully, we are not safe anywhere. In America, the same type of attack could happen. A terrorist could strike anywhere and anytime when he has the resources to organize an attack. This terrorist took an ordinary object that people use every day, a car, and used it as a killing machine. Anyone could do this. No matter the amount of security that is beefed up, there is always a concern about terrorist attacks. I don’t think terrorist attacks will ever cease to exist unless the underlying problem that all terrorists have is addressed.”*

— Malkie Rubin, Grade 12

*“What Western countries can do to prevent the Islamic State terror in their countries is to follow through on their background checks. The perpetrator was under investigation a couple of years ago for suspected ties to terrorists and violence. If they would have followed through, this would’ve never happened and this man would be in jail by now. Instead, this happened. What they can do to prevent attacks by*

*their own citizens is to keep them under constant surveillance. But even this won't help because there are too many citizens to keep track of."*

— Yael Feygin, Grade 9

# TWO PEOPLE SET TO CIRCLE THE MOON ON VACATION NEXT YEAR

The United States government is increasingly cutting its budget for space travel and space exploration, and the project is becoming increasingly a focus of private companies and wealthy people. Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, is one of the leaders in promoting new ambitious goals for space travel, and perhaps an eventual settlement on Mars. There is some discussion about whether private space travel will meet the technology and safety standards expected of the federal government's space program, NASA.

*“Although it is true that this trip can be very dangerous and poses many risks for its participants, I think it is still a very beneficial one. America is progressing as a nation, and the government now does not control all space travel. If a private enterprise wants to send people up in space, they should get that opportunity as long as everything is thoroughly checked by professionals to be as safe as if the government was authorizing this trip. We should allow the world to change in these ways, as everything is scary and exciting the first time, yet is all part of how the world progresses.”*

— Avigail Ovitsb, Grade 11

*“Private companies should not be able to send things into outer space because they want to. This topic is highly risky not only to the travelers but to the environment and the population. Since it is such a serious trip, it should be used solely for the expansion of knowledge and not for amusement.”*

— Nomie Fermaglich, Grade 11

*“Initially, I thought that this is terrible, and civilians should not be allowed to go on such journeys, but then I realized that this is how people felt when airplanes were invented and instituted.”*

*— Esther Guelfguat, Grade 10*



# TRUMP'S MAIN POLITICAL IMPACT SO FAR HAS BEEN IN REPEALING REGULATIONS

While Donald Trump's 100 Days did not feature major legislative accomplishments in reform of health care, tax policy, budget, border walls or Muslim bans, it did feature a quiet but somewhat earth-shattering revolution of revoking regulations. These regulations generally are meant to keep the environment and workplaces safe and protected, but they do increase the costs of running a business. Trump has already revoked many dozens of regulations, and the stock market has risen appreciatively as he has done so.

*“Laissez-faire was originally the economic system Americans considered ideal, believing in an economy with little or no government intervention. We have moved farther and farther from this in the past century (the best example would be the New Deal which exemplified a great amount of government intervention in the economy). It is interesting to note that the federal government felt the need to regulate our economy when they felt it was necessary to save or improve the economy, and therefore in times of greater economic prosperity there should be less need for government regulation. However, I do believe that many of the regulations put in place help serve consumers well, ensuring greater quality and efficiency in goods, but they undoubtedly have negative economic impacts as well. I think that it is interesting of Trump to remove many regulations- and in a somewhat trial and error form. I think that Trump can see if our economy can handle a more Laissez-faire system, which he deems ideal, and continue to regulate depending on the results he finds.”*

— Ashira Feld, Grade 12



# NEW HEALTH CARE BILL FACES TOUGH VOTE IN CONGRESS

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan has spent this past spring attempting to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). Republicans have been very divided over how much to repeal of the existing law; some want to maintain its requirement for citizens to be insured or its requirement that insurance companies cannot deny coverage to sick people, while others want these provisions removed. A bill known as the American Health Care Act went through the House of Representatives. At first, it seemed too moderate and similar to Obamacare to pass, but it passed in the House in early May. It is currently being revised by the Senate before they consider a vote on it.

*“I believe that the Trump Administration is taking this on right now because Trump is constantly trying to prove that what he spoke about during his campaign and all the things he wanted to change or do is a priority for him. Additionally, I believe this is wise because most view the subject of healthcare as catch-22 and that is the situation with most things in life; some will like your idea and others won’t. With the Trump Administration dealing with this issue now, they are again showcasing to America that they have no qualms about doing what is right by the American people (or what Trump thinks is right, rather) and they don’t care if someone likes it or not, they are seekers for the people and want what is best for them.”*



— Chayala Hauptman, Grade 10

# WHAT MIGHT BECOME OF THE AMERICAN LABOR FORCE WHEN ROBOTS CONQUER WORK

Automation is a process that is restructuring our world rapidly. Many jobs in manufacturing are being replaced by the work of robots. This trend will be compounded when self-driving cars are safe enough to use, and people will no longer be needed as drivers of trucks, buses and taxis. With artificial intelligence improving, automated robot services will be able to perform complex jobs, like those of customer service representatives. Robots are cheaper than people because they do not need to be paid a salary. However, the people whose jobs they replace will be out of work.

*“Personally, I have not had experience with robots taking over jobs of people. However, I have heard that there are now robots doing surgery and replacing surgeons. I do not think this is a good idea because though robots may be quick and precise, they are merely pieces of metal that can easily malfunction. I do not think that it is worth putting a life in danger especially when people’s jobs are at risk. Additionally, I think that this phenomenon looks really bad now, especially with Trump as president. Trump wants the illegal immigrants out because they are taking American’s jobs, so how can he let robots do the same thing?”*

— Racheli Brunner, Grade 11

*“Robots are really just computer programs so anything electronic to some extent is a robot: turnstiles, trains, cars, etc. People think robots can replace humans, but they forget that robots can make big mistakes and because they don’t possess logic they would never know the difference. My uncle works for Google and he had the ability to drive in a driverless Uber. However, when he entered the car he found two engineers sitting in the front. When he asked them why they were there, they said*

*that the car would never be able to fully drive on its own, and would always need human engineers to help guide it. Robots will never fully replace humans.”*

— Baila Schuster, Grade 12

*“On the Henry Hudson Bridge, there used to be human toll collectors. Sitting in the backseat, I would see my father or mother hand over the toll, the person would take it and wish us a good day (or night). If we were in the HOV lane in another bridge, the person in the booth would check the backseat to make sure there were more than three people, and I would wave and smile. Now, all of the toll booths have been taken down and there is cashless toll collection which allows the cars to speed by without stopping. There are no mini traffic jams caused by one person not having enough change, but there are also no more smiling toll collectors. Another impact robots have had in my life are those which write and submit my homework for me, such as this comment.”*

— Noa Garfinkel, Grade 10

## THE TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES WE LOVE ARE BECOMING GIANTS... WHICH THE FEDS DO NOT LOVE

New technological and digital breakthroughs are usually developed by the same five giant tech companies: Amazon, Apple, Google, Microsoft and Facebook. Some are now terming these five companies the “fearsome five.” The federal government is starting to consider whether the free market will require these companies to be broken down into smaller ones to prevent them from dominating the market and acting as monopolies.

*“I agree that in 2017 it is harder to create an entirely new technology platform, yet using the preexisting platforms we already have, startup companies have a lot of room to expand. Often, only in retrospect do we realize how much we could have improved. For example, before the creation of the popular social media platforms, I’m sure many people thought technology had reached its peak, yet Zuckerberg surprised us all. I think we will continue to be surprised in the future.”*

— Racheli Neuman, Grade 11



# 2017 IS THE YEAR OF IMPLOSION FOR AMERICAN RETAIL

While the American economy is in very strong shape in 2017—the stock market is up, and unemployment is way down—one industry is facing immense challenges. Brick-and-mortar retail stores are struggling for their very survival like never before, far worse than they were doing a year or two ago. It seems that American shopping habits are in the process of shifting very profoundly to online retail.

*“Oh no! What are we going to do without my store [which has recently announced bankruptcy]? But if I have to be honest, I think we are bringing this challenge upon ourselves. If I keep buying my every other need (want) on Amazon Prime, then I am inadvertently hurting my variety of options by not giving others business.”*

— Rachel Liebling, Grade 11



# AN OVERALL UPDATE ON THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

Students evaluated the successes, failures, works-in-progress and scandals of the First 100 Days of the Trump presidency.

*“Watching President Trump’s first 100 days was interesting to say the least. The first 100 days vacillated between hopeful and circus. Some days it seemed that President Trump would be the first to accomplish things that were only dreams in the past. Yet other days, America felt as if the government was a circus, headed by the biggest clown of all time. Looking forward, we are hopeful that the President will lead our country toward glorious times, and away from the shameful past eight years.”*

— Talia Gerber, Grade 11

*“I think the actions that Trump has taken have proven to critics that he is not as extreme as they thought. Many of the things people were afraid that he would do, he is not ending up doing. Despite this or perhaps because of it, I don’t think he accomplished a lot during his first 100 days.”*

— Channa Gelbtuch, Grade 9

*“When Trump won the presidency, many of those who had opposed him had accepted his victory with the hope that he would surprise them, exceed their expectations. Unfortunately, he has not done much to counter the perceptions that many Americans held. His presidency has been plagued by self-imposed scandals and slip-ups that an experienced politician would have avoided. Much of what people are upset about has been caused either directly or indirectly by the president, like his tweets about wiretapping, or Sean Spicer’s*

*numerous blunders. Perhaps if his staff was more professional, the media would focus on his accomplishments, and not fact-checking a group of people with confusion between truth and alternative facts. But nobody can deny that Trump has managed to accomplish many of his campaign promises. His victories with Neil Gorsuch and intervention in Syria showed that his administration can succeed. Unfortunately for him, they have been overshadowed by his failures. His overturned immigration bans and health care plan show that the president needs to take on one issue at a time. Trump's presidency is off to a rocky start, but with a little more focus, he may be able to actualize his vision for America."*

— Ayelet Huberfeld, Grade 12

*"A campaign is a campaign, meaning that when running, candidates tend to make action sound more imminent than possible. With our system of checks and balances, we ensure that no one branch of government has complete control over any one decision. President Trump, while president, does not have complete control over what passes and what doesn't. Taking this into consideration, I believe he has actually accomplished quite a lot in his first one hundred days, and still has three years to attempt anything else he intends to change."*

— Serene Klapper, Grade 12

# IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, GOOGLE HAS CONQUERED CLASSROOMS

Technology experts have noticed a tectonic shift in the use of technology in classrooms since 2015. It appears that a revolution is underway leading to profoundly wired classrooms, using Google products, and a change in classroom structure toward more projects and collaborative learning. This shift might even change school curricula in drastic ways in the years to come.

*“I think that the changes of putting tech in classrooms will lead to more and better learning. Students will be more excited to learn due to the addition of the new technology into the classrooms. The Google technology helps teachers spend less time at the beginning of class collecting papers, because the papers can be collected online. Due to this, teachers are able to teach more and students are able to learn more. The added technology in classrooms is a huge benefit in the 21st century.”*

— Hadas Feygin, Grade 10

*“Bringing more technology into the classroom can definitely aid the learning process, however it cannot replace it. Many times as new devices come out, people believe technology is completely overtaking classic studies and is the new face of the 21st Century. However, this is not the case. Using technology can help with the learning, offering tools to make the process more accessible and easier, but the knowledge will always be the force driving it. Everything boils down to the material you learn.”*

— Miriam Mermelstein, Grade 9



*“Google is a business, therefore to say that they are carrying out such a huge operation for the sake of education doesn’t seem entirely true. Yes, they are charging 30 dollars for a Chromebook, but they are gaining something very valuable—user data. By being the primary provider of classroom gadgets, they get the students’ data, classroom trends etc., which are valuable to them for marketing purposes. Although Google is proving useful in the classroom, you do have to question their intentions!”*

— Chloe Gertner, Grade 12



# THE PAST IS THE PAST? MEMORY OF THE CONFEDERACY IS DISPUTED

In several southern cities, such as New Orleans and Charlottesville, Virginia, authorities have removed long-standing statues that stood in prominent public places commemorating Confederate heroes from the Civil War. These decisions have been met with conflict, and supporters of the statues have argued (at times with threats of violence) that it is important not to erase the past, even when the past committed wrongdoings. Others have maintained that the Confederate cause in the Civil War cannot be separated from its moral taint of slavery, and the statues cannot remain.

*“Statues put up in central public places are intended to be a symbol, a way of celebrating the life (and sometimes the death) of the person being immortalized. Keeping up the statues means we are condoning what Jackson, Lee, and others fought for in the Civil War. Removing the statues doesn’t mean we are denying or reinterpreting what these influential people did; we are merely sending the message that we no longer support or rally around these people’s actions. Just because we disagree with what they did, it doesn’t mean we should forget them. Instead, moving statues of controversial figures to museums would be a way to effectively contextualize the people’s actions and clarify what they mean to us nowadays. By doing so, we wouldn’t be condemning the ancestry of Southern white people - we would be celebrating that they fought for their beliefs, yet devoting space to explain why their beliefs are offensive and out of place today. There’s no reason to tiptoe around the feelings of people whose “Southern heritage” is founded on racism, when we can make evident to the world what we DO believe in, through removing those statues.”*

— Tamar Spoerri, Grade 9

*“I think that there definitely is a value to keeping statues that remind us of nega-*

*tives things from the past because we can learn from them. If we want to take away all the negative things people have done and not be reminded of what people have done wrong in the past then we will never learn how to better proceed in the future. Imagine a history classroom that did not teach anything that any nation did wrong. There'd be no lesson at all. We need the reminders because otherwise bad things can happen again and the cycle will continue; history WILL repeat itself. However, I do agree with those who say that the statues should not be in celebrated public spots and that perhaps we could just place them in museums for people to learn from them there.”*

— Shoshana Farber, Grade 11

*“Although the statues of past confederate generals are a part of history, and important to remember and even commemorate, one cannot ignore the fact that by glorifying them and the role they played in the Civil War, they are disregarding the significance it holds pertaining to the African Americans who were stripped of many of their constitutional rights. While the south should be able to proudly commemorate their ancestors, one must keep in mind, that the movement they partook in harmed many others. It is a lack of sensitivity and awareness to believe that keeping these statues up is not a problem. Relocating these statues to a museum sounds like the perfect solution, to both commemorate southern war heroes and remember the past, without disregarding the realities they brought about.”*

— Elishava Rosensweig, Grade 12



# NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS

## CONTINUE

Over the course of the past few months, North Korea has exasperated the international community by testing long-range missiles that can probably carry the country's nuclear weapons across the oceans. Donald Trump wants to respond in harsh ways, but has found that his interest in being harsh to North Korea will require him to be very nice to China, who is the one country with much of any influence over what happens in North Korea. Meanwhile, South Korea has elected a new president interested in arriving at peaceful talks with North Korea, a very different approach from the one that the United States would want them to favor.

*“One scenario that will make the situation in North Korea worse is if South Korea says that they won’t get involved at all whatsoever, since it’s particularly the long range missiles Kim Jong-Un is testing. One scenario that can potentially improve the situation in North Korea is if China steps up and coerces in to demilitarizing North Korea and they agree. However this probably won’t happen because North Korea and China are allies and probably have no problem with the long range missiles being tested.”*

— Gitty Boshnak, Grade 10

*“This situation reminds me a lot about the Cold War and the threats from Russia. Russia amped up its military and artillery and US followed. North Korea is building up its weapons and US is urging China to follow. Way back when Russia was a threat Detente was settled in Nixon’s time. Possibly South Korea can do the same. These situations have already happened in history. Read the past and you can predict the future.”*

— Chana Leah Seif, Grade 11









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