

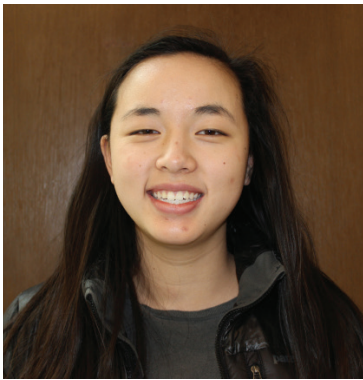
# Student Views

## What does the walkout mean to you?



Mac Zelazny, Sophomore

“It’s a really powerful cause but you also have to make sure that you’re walking out for the right reasons.”



Brianna Chou, Senior

“The thing that makes this so powerful to me is that thousands of schools will be participating in it and we can make our voices heard.”



Dominic de Boer, Junior

“To me, I think this event has become too politicized. I wish it were being treated as more of a memorial for the victims.”



Xariah Chase, Sophomore

“I just find it funny that suddenly everyone cares about gun control when people usually recoil from social issues like this.”



Will Hurley, Senior

“I think with this walkout hopefully we will be able to get the country’s attention and make progress with the issue of gun violence.”

## In defense of the humanities



by Arjun Thakkar

Ask any high school student what their favorite subject is, and unfortunately, they probably won’t say language. Probably not history. And most definitely not English.

To be fair, everyone knows that lunch is objectively the best subject (if you’re not taking AP Lunch then shame on you), but after that, science and math reign supreme.

The humanities have become the Michael Scott of academics; everyone hates him, but if they truly got to know him for who he really was, then they’d realize he’s not such a bad guy.

Both the modern job climate and popular culture have ostracized the humanities as something to be avoided at all costs. Being an English or History major gets you looked down upon by your family when there other areas of study are much more ‘practical’ like engineering or biology.

This is something I have struggled with. I vastly prefer studying open-ended topics over objective fields, but it feels as though I would be condemning myself to jobless-ness by doing so.

When former president Barack Obama jokes about an art history degree being less valuable than a technical one, it’s clear that our culture supports an agenda of ending the humanities.

Not only is this disappointing, but it’s also a frightening prospect to consider. For as much as we can joke about the pointlessness of studying literature, there are dangerous

consequences to the idea that the humanities don’t matter.

It’s for this reason that I made this defense of the humanities and what changes should be made in a humanities education.

The humanities are what distinguish human beings from dogs or cats or the robots that will inevitably take over the world; the humanities encompass the human experience, portraying art, emotions, thoughts, and history.

Any calculator can do math, but can it interpret the purpose of those operations? Any animal has instincts, but can they portray those instincts through art or critically think about them? This is why the humanities are valuable; they make us human, interesting people that don’t just act, but act with reason.

So what point is there to studying the humanities? Well, each endeavor within the humanities serves to make us more human than we were before as our thinking becomes more analytical and our reasoning sharper.

The humanities should have a multiplicative effect, enhancing all that we do through the emotion and thought behind the act.

This has real importance in STEM fields because, believe it or not, there’s a real need for an ethical inquiry within technological advancements.

The objective-based mindset of STEM does lead to new developments, like artificial intelligence and increasingly advanced weaponry, but without seriously considering the ethics of the tech, this can make the progression seem more like a regression.

To quote Jeff Goldblum’s character from Jurassic Park, “Your scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could that they didn’t stop to think if they should.”

The humanities develop the critical thinking skills that are key to

our increasingly tech-driven world. Jurassic Park is fiction, but our technology is rapidly approaching science fiction levels as it is.

Companies are developing video software with artificial human dialogue that will soon be indistinguishable from an actual human speaking. A speech from the president will soon be impossible to tell if it’s real or not.

And they say fake news is a problem now.

I realize this is a drastic conclusion to draw from a seemingly simple issue, but with such denouncement of the humanities, that’s the implication.

I’m not suggesting that science should be done away with altogether, nor do I think we should spend years analyzing prose just for the sake of it.

To start, our education system needs to move past the simply reductive elements of humanities education that cause students to hate it in the first place.

I suspect that so many students hate English because they encounter such strange teaching methods. To clarify, I do have the utmost respect for the English, History, and MCL departments of this school, and I’m sure there is purpose behind most of what teachers do.

But it’s no wonder why a student would hate their class if their teacher asks ridiculous tasks of them, like writing reductively on what “the meaning” or “the theme” of a book is when there’s much more interesting conversations to be had.

I would hope that the departments also look beyond simple test scores and grades as those are simply inadequate forms of measuring a student’s progress in the humanities.

That’s where the problem STEMs from.

## Do I need my phone?

by Ezra Wallach

A survey conducted by the Kaiser Foundation showed that kids use technology for 7.5 hours a day, not including school. Even more surprising, this was back in 2009.

While this is just one statistic, it has greater consequences; technology affects us in ways that aren’t always shown by surveys or science experiments.

All of the extra hours spent on social media and Netflix can quickly be turned into hours not spent on schoolwork or other hobbies; when it comes to technology, almost every upside can be easily flipped into a downside.

*Technology affects us in ways that aren’t always shown by surveys or science experiments.*

Because of technology, activities such as sleep or study are at times replaced with more exciting alternatives, averting people from significant and important tasks.

So, if technology has really prevented us from doing more and being better, maybe it’s time to start blaming it too.

During my freshman year, I always played games on my iPad at school. And not just during lunch or free periods – during math and science classes, too.

Not only did this distract me from important instruction during class, but I also lost track of what was important to me.

Sadly, it took me until my sophomore year to realize that my priorities were twisted; technology had truly gotten in the way of the grades that I told myself I wanted for college; it was a constant distraction all day and night.

According to a recent study by

the Pew Research center, close to a quarter of teens claim to be online “almost constantly.” Another survey by CNN had close to half of its respondents claiming to be at least somewhat addicted to technology.

Obviously, this doesn’t represent every single person, but it says something as to how much technology has taken over our lives.

Without the constant access to screens, I like to think my grades would’ve been higher but it’s hard to blame something that I’ve never lived without. But that doesn’t mean I shouldn’t.

As much as I love my iPhone, there will always be a big part of me that thinks I would be better off without it.

Would my life really be any worse without these benefits of modern technology?

Those memories would have still been made. Records would have to be bought and not streamed. And without Google Maps, I would just get lost in Winnetka, and then have to keep driving around until I found something familiar.

While there are clear benefits to technology, lots of empty hours are spent scrolling through Facebook feeds.

In addition to the distractions of technology, real studies have shown a rise in mental health issues among teens that are close to parallel with the rise in social media and cell phones.

The reality is that technology causes just as much stress and distraction as it does fun and happiness. Finding the balance between the pros and cons of technology can help everybody get the best out of what they have.

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