

the  
Runestone

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# Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

I am thrilled you've decided to pick up The Runestone's 11th Edition. Featuring the voices of retiring teachers, next-year college students, and several freshmen, our wide range of staff has done a phenomenal job this year with writing, editing, and designing. They deserve the world; I'm so lucky to have worked with you all.

This is my final edition with The Runestone, and I couldn't have asked for a better staff this past year. I am excited to announce the new Co-Editor in Chief—London Lindley—and the new Layout Chief—Jisu Oh—for 2022-2023! Though I'll certainly miss this club, these two are sure to bring energy and excitement to the newspaper next year. Thank you all for your continued support; I can't wait to see where this newspaper will go.

Goodbye for now,  
Piper Wilson

# Memorable Moments

By Lena Tan

As the 2021-22 school year comes to a close, some of our best Mendon students reflected on their most memorable moments. During this crazy year we all have been able to readapt to being in school again and find the positives within it. I know that I have had a great year and I hope you all have too!

"My favorite moment from Mendon this year was when Mrs. Schmitt took down the Anti-Dylan Yu paper from the door and then seconds later Dylan barged into the room! Or doing the Harlem Shake video in Mrs. Schmitt's AP World Class. Definitely my all-time favorite class of the year!"

Samaira Bhatia (Grade 10)

"I feel like for me personally, chorus has been so much fun this year! Also just being around my friends every day in general has been a really nice change compared to last year's hybrid learning!"

Avery Wallace (Grade 9)

"School assembly-wise, the drumming performance during lunch periods, my friends and I were all having so much fun playing the drums along with them and just dying of laughter because it was so hard to keep up with them! Then also my Spanish class with Señor Matthews (9th period) is genuinely the most amazing and entertaining class ever because of the students' dynamic. There have been so many moments where all the students and Señor are just talking and laughing, it's the best time! One day, we were working on our final projects for a unit, and I needed pictures of Señor since I was making him an Instagram as my project. The whole class was distracted by it and taking pictures of him with random backgrounds--he was standing in front of the smartboard as if it was a green screen for the pictures--it was so funny!"

Rose Anselm (Grade 11)

"My favorite memory was when my field hockey team won sectionals!" -Sofia Fantuzzo (Grade 9)

"I really liked being in the Pit Orchestra for the Disaster musical with Mr. Maguda." -Marina Foley (Grade 9)

"My favorite moment from Mendon this year was when the guy in the Viking costume did the 'Griddy' at lunch!" -Kat Delate (Grade 9)

"My favorite Mendon memory was dressing up as a maid with my friends and having matching costumes on Halloween" -Max Izzo (Grade 10)

"Going to Sectional for Varsity Swimming was such a great experience, my favorite moment for sure!" -Merick Weissman (Grade 9)

What a year it has been! Throughout the ups and downs, we have remained victorious, striving to be our best selves. Looking forward to next year and other further pursuits, Mendon Runestone wishes you all the best of luck! Enjoy a well-deserved relaxing summer, see you next year!

# Retiring Interviews 2022

*By Leah C., Anaela K., Rena L., and Josiah T.*

So many valuable teachers are leaving us this year at Mendon: those interviewed here are Mme. Tolpa (French), Mrs. O'Neill (Math), Mrs. Merrifield (Special Education), and Mrs. Ark (English). Before they go, we had the chance to sit down and chat about their time at Mendon, their passion for teaching, among other topics; retirees, we will miss you all so much!

## **What have you taught at your time at Mendon?**

Tolpa: I've taught the entire high school [French] curriculum, short of Level 4 and 5. I've taught AP 18 out of the 20 years.

## **What made you decide to start teaching?**

Tolpa: Well, I started out in business. I didn't love the coursework, but I did it anyways, and got a degree. I worked in business for 2 years, but I talked to a counselor, and she said, "What would you think about teaching? You know the language, and we have a real shortage of language teachers." At that point I was 26, 27 years old. I decided to do it, and I've never regretted it.

## **Do you have a favorite class?**

Tolpa: I really love teaching AP because students who make it to AP, having taught them along the way, I see the progress and a culmination of their progress in AP, which is really rewarding as a teacher. These are students that love language, whether because of professional reasons or they want to challenge themselves. It's like teaching an English AP in the French language.

## **What are you looking forward to after retirement?**

Tolpa: I want to spend more time with my daughter in North Carolina. After that, I thought about working with refugees, because I've done workshops here a few summers ago, and they needed people to work with the refugees. I've already been offered a lot of different things whether it be in my community to being a science teacher in a French immersion school in NYC.

## **What made you decide to start teaching?**

Merrifield: I've always had a passion for teaching. From the beginning, it was something I wanted to do.

## **Do you have a favorite class?**

Merrifield: I loved coteaching 9<sup>th</sup> grade English and 11<sup>th</sup> grade English, but my favorite grade is probably 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **What is something you'll miss about teaching?**

Merrifield: Talking with students every day.

## **What's one memory you've made teaching that you'll never forget?**

Merrifield: When a student finally gets something in a self-contained class! Self-contained classes through education go out for non-core class and all have 1 teacher.

## **What's one message you have for your students?**

Merrifield: Reach for the stars. Set the bar high and they will make it.

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## **What have you taught at your time at Mendon?**

Ark: I have taught English classes in each grade level, and I have been here so long that there are classes I taught that no longer exist.

## **What made you decide to start teaching?**

Ark: I never had any intention of becoming an educator, but my father convinced me to student teach and I've never looked back; I can't imagine doing anything else.

## **Do you have a favorite class?**

Ark: I love teaching Public Speaking.

## **What are you looking forward to after retirement?**

Ark: For sure, I look forward to sleeping past 5:30am, and I cannot wait to figure out the rest.

## **What is something you'll miss about teaching?**

Ark: I will miss making student connections and spending time with faculty members with whom I have formed special friendships.

## **What's one message you have for your students?**

Ark: Turn your obstacles into strengths!



**What is something you'll miss about teaching?**

Tolpa: Mostly my students. I laugh every single day...I love teaching teenagers! You're quirky and funny. I'll also miss my colleagues. We have a good working relationship in the World Language department; we have a lot of fun together.

There are tons of opportunities out there, I just have to figure out which fits me at the moment.

**What's one memory you've made teaching that you'll never forget?**

Tolpa: The best experience has been seeing the joy in my students, an experience was the school exchange with Rennes. All the students that did that exchange had wonderful experiences, I'd say it's great to do things outside of the classroom with your students, because they see you as a person and not a teacher in the walls of the classroom.

**What's one message you have for your students?**

Tolpa: Pursue your passions, whatever that might be. Don't narrow your opportunities, really do what you love but experience what you can, I think that's what I would say. There's a lot of opportunities, and sometimes we tend to say, "you know, okay, this is all I can do". Don't narrow your choices: you might be surprised what it brings.



**What have you taught at your time at Mendon?**

O'Neill: My first few years I taught Course 1/2/3 Integrated Math. Then NYS shifted to Math A and B, and I taught both of those. Recently though, I've been teaching Geometry Honors, Precalculus, and occasionally College Math. I've taught almost everything...except AP Stats or Calc.

**What made you decide to start teaching?**

O'Neill: I worked as an engineer for 10 years before I got my teaching degree. I never really connected with it. When I was in high school, I was good at math and science, so my counselor told me I should go into engineering. As an engineer, I was always the one to train new people or supervise interns. I also loved coaching lacrosse, so it seemed natural to go into teaching. It was the best decision I ever made.

**Do you have a favorite class?**

O'Neill: I think my favorite class to teach is Geometry Honors.

**What are you looking forward to after retirement?**

O'Neill: I am most looking forward to being able to spend more time with my family. My kids are all adults living in other cities—DC and Boston—so it will be nice to be able to visit them anytime I want without the weekend restriction. I also plan to travel like crazy.

**What is something you'll miss about teaching?**

O'Neill: I will miss my colleagues in the Math department. To me, they are like family. I will also miss the relationships I have with students. I am still in close touch with students I taught years ago. Being around students is the best part of teaching.

**What's one memory you've made teaching that you'll never forget?**

O'Neill: One of my fondest memories is being named by a special student as her choice for Honor an Educator during her senior lacrosse game. It meant so much to me for many reasons.

**What's one message you have for your students?**

O'Neill: I have a story posted by my desk that I think of always about two wolves fighting inside you. My message is: "Feed the right wolf." Also, consider the needs of others as you go through your life.

# Inside Look: Student Council

What does the Student Council really do? Every year, the student body elects members from their class to be representatives of the school Student Council. They watch as each potential representative delivers a speech; then they make careful considerations, and all students take a vote. This happens every year, and each year new representatives (or past representatives) step up to take on the job of being a part of Mendon's Student Council. But have you ever wondered what are the exact "roles" of these representatives and officers?

*By Julia Sun*

Student council means "a group of students elected by their peers to address issues of concern and organize student events and activities." To be honest, that is essentially what the Student Council does. Though we don't focus all that much on "making reforms" in the school itself, we are the ones who organize student events and activities. You may be wondering, "wait, I don't even remember taking part in voting for anyone to be in student council last year...". Well, you're right. Due to COVID, we didn't quite have "elections" in 2020. Last year, you received an email (if you were in a remote setting, like I was) or you heard about the opportunity to run for a spot in the morning announcements. Then, you filled out some paperwork and either sent it over to Mr. Daggs in an email or handed the papers in at school. After that, if there were enough spaces for more representatives, you were basically guaranteed a position. Much like the elections taking place this year, they were looking at a maximum of 12 representatives per class. For example, looking at the class of 2023, they have over 12 people running. So, the student body must vote for their 12 representatives this year.

Those of us in the Student Council are the ones that plan all the "big events," like homecoming, fundraisers, and prom. We also deal with some minor budgeting things, like giving money to clubs that may need or want it, as well as holding fundraising events. This year, the Freshmen class of 2025 did only 1 fundraiser, which was selling tumblers. Though we only meet as a large group once a week (mostly on Fridays), we always get a lot done at these short meetings.

The student body must vote for their 12 representatives this year.

Not only do we plan and organize school events, but we also strive to make Mendon High School better and greater than it already is. I also participate in another club—the "Principal Advisory Committee/Council." In this club, we discuss more on the issues of MHS and how to change or fix them. These issues include topics from race and equality, all the way to the announcements and even subjects taught in school. For those of you reading this article and are interested in clubs like the student council and the principal advisory committee/council, I strongly recommend that you apply.

From afar, what members of the Student Council do can seem vague and broad. I know some people may even think that we "aren't doing enough." I personally feel that we do just the right amount to organize events such as field day and the junior/senior prom, but there is always room for improvement. After that whacky year of 2020, there is much to catch up on and restore. But I hope that now, after reading this summary of the jobs of your elected representatives, you have a better understanding of the true role and impact of the Student Council at Mendon High School.

# Mid(adjective) *By: Angel Tang*

\ 'mid \

*Synonyms: crutches, Mendon, Sutherland, sewage pipes, AP Calc*

Let me address the elephant in the room. The fact that Sutherland's sewage pipes broke, and they got a whole day off school from it and Mendon only had their after-school activities cancelled—that certainly tips the scale in terms of the Mendon/Sutherland rivalry. Like, in your face Sutherland kids, Mendon is better at fixing pipes, but that's probably all we'll ever amount to.

Also, y'all are uglier and hairier than I remember. Either shave or hide your beard with a mask—talking to all you ladies out there with all your handlebar moustaches. Though, I keep my mask on so Mr. March can't see my face (or my goatee) every time he announces another test which will require another 30-point curve. I mean, yes, there really are more fish in the sea, but the sad thing is, they're all mask fishers.

Also, did Costco have a crutches clearance sale that I missed out on? This Asian hates to admit it, but I am jealous of your big metal chopsticks — imagine the size of the dumplings you could pick up with those things.

Major news alert: Remind changed its logo. It's no longer a cloud. Instead, it's an "R" that looks like the Kellogg's logo (waffles?). I'm describing the change as if you can't see it yourself. I feel like this is very representative of the end of the year. Remind looks bad and so do we. Also, its signature blue is now a few shades lighter, and I think that's a big fashion no-no (for some reason, trash bags as dresses are ok, but designers will throw shade if you change shades) and it also reminds me of a pregnancy test. Oddly fitting for high school.

Highly looking forward to being in a church for the second time ever (third if you count the bomb threat) in my life and praying to the biology gods to tell me what evolution is (you know I am desperate

when I ignore Charles Darwin's monkeys and call upon Adam and Eve to explain what tectonic plates are). I am also 2 u-sub away from bubbling in C for every single question for the AP Calc exam. Including the FRQ section. The plan is to name all my variables after the Teletubbies, so the AP grader thinks I share the same passions as them, so they'll give me a 5. Tinky Winky, Dispy, Laa Laa, and Mao's cousin Po (the failed communist leader). It's 2 am, and I am trying to start my AP studying after completely rerouting my Wi-Fi because my computer is like an immuno-compromised patient and thinks everything is a virus. I am not going to self-reflect about the year and then slap that onto a digital piece of paper without talking about Teletubbies, my one true love—besides my beans (me too, Thoreau, me too).

Pro tip from Angel: don't talk about how you're a cat in love with lasers and your Teletubby obsessions in your laser lab internship application because they just aren't ready for that level of sophistication. They're honestly just jealous their omega-3 lasers could never be as bright as that baby head sun.

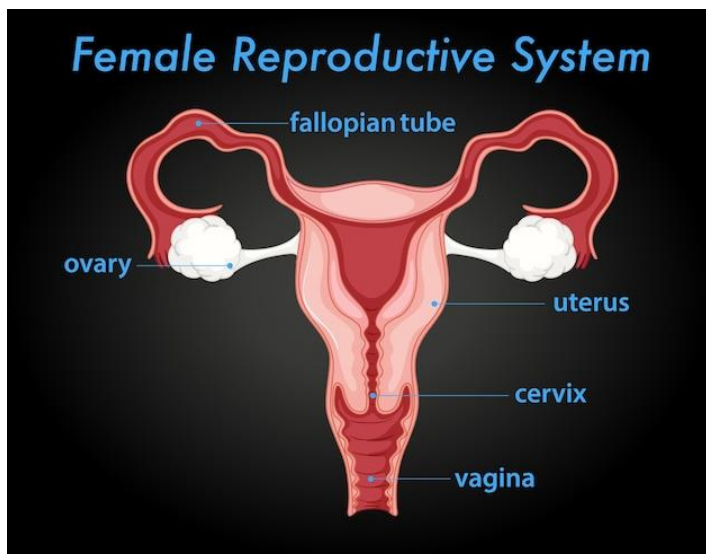
By the way, high-key contemplating not coming to school senior year and instead, building my own house near Mendon Ponds and all those drumlins that we all had to observe in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Earth Science on that one field trip (it's a rite of passage) then cultivating my own wheat and beans because only agricultural goods would ever want to be friends with me. And then getting extreme seasonal depression in April because it's still snowing in Rochester all while advocating for minimalism (i.e., only having one crutch instead of 2)—shoutout to Thoreau for inspiring me to follow my dreams. Either that or I'm going to Thoreau myself out a window.



# The "Gross" Kind of Pain

Pain is a normal part of life. You bump into a table, get a papercut, stub your toe, or get one of those nasty hairline zits. Minor pain is an inconvenience, but not much more, and after a bit you can forget it even happened. Then there's the worse pain: headaches, nausea, bad bruises. These have a bigger impact on everyday life until they go away. For the time being, they're treated with sympathy and care. Mostly.

*By R Cofer*



People tend to have quite a different reaction to a specific kind of pain. In place of kind words and wishes of a speedy recovery are retorts and scoffs and questions like "is it really that bad?" This form of suffering is better known as menstrual cramps.

The menstrual cycle goes as follows: an egg is released from one of the ovaries into a fallopian tube, where it would be fertilized. If not, it is carried into the uterus. The uterus has a thick lining, prepared in case of pregnancy.

When pregnancy does not occur, the lining and egg must be removed. Thus: periods. During the shedding process, the uterus contracts to better expel the tissue. These contractions, or cramps, can range from barely there to extremely painful.

Despite their wide range, many people assume cramps always fall to the less painful side of the scale. More than half of menstruators experience mild pain; while intense pain is less common, it is still the case for many people.

Assumptions and stigma surrounding period pain run rampant in society. One can't guess at someone else's pain levels, but people often do when it comes to cramps, and use inaccurate beliefs to brush off and even mock menstruators who use support to help themselves feel better. Painkillers, chocolate, and birth control are all tools known to ease menstrual cramps, but the stigma around these is pungent, especially for birth control



Birth control is often only viewed as being used to prevent pregnancy, and while it can be used for that, it can also be used to help with period pain. Birth control has either estrogen or progesterone, or both. These hormones drop at the beginning of a period, so by taking them, hormone levels are more regular and lessen cramps. They can also regulate cycles to make them easier to track.



Stereotypes surrounding periods is due to sexism. Menstruation is a natural, healthy part of life for about half of the world, yet it is viewed as “dirty” and used to make fun of emotional people with uteri. How many times have you heard someone say “looks like someone’s on their period” as a way to brush off an angry reaction? Belittling people who are assigned female at birth is nothing new, and when it comes to periods, it can be dangerous. For

example, in Nepal, many women recognize Chhaupadi, a tradition that forces people who are menstruating to leave their homes and stay in shacks called Chhau Sheds (seen in picture). This tradition is based on the belief that menstruating people are impure, and that period blood causes sickness among family members. Not all menstruators are exiled, however a 2018 study found that 100% were subject to some form of discrimination, such as not being allowed to touch food or water. This damages self-image and enforces negative stereotypes about menstruation. It has also led to the death of many people who are forced to leave their homes, abandoning access to medical care.

Menstruation is a perfectly normal, healthy, and usually safe part of life for many people. Pain during this time can vary from minor to extreme, but all should be respected and not underestimated. If someone says they are in pain, who else would know better? Stereotypes and downplaying of menstruation and menstrual pain only encourages sexism and leads to oppression and division among people. Support your menstruating friends and listen to them, and if you personally menstruate, reach out for help and support if you need them. Break down the stigma.

# My Experience Applying to College

Now that college application season is over for another year, I wanted to write an article that takes you through my journey of finding my college.

*By Grace Bennett*

Keep in mind: everyone's experience is different; I did not want to go to Dickinson originally.

My college application journey started about halfway through my junior year of high school. Pretty basic, right? Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, juniors were not allowed to go on tours. I did some virtual tours, but there's nothing like being on campus. After Decision Day for the class of 2021, campuses began to let juniors on campus, but only for outdoor walking tours.

During the summer going into my senior year, I did most of my tours; I knew I was going to have swim season in the fall and wasn't going to be able to tour then. Over the summer I fell in love with one school: Colgate University in Hamilton, NY. I was obsessed. Every school afterward, I compared them to Colgate. And to be honest, nothing was comparing. I set my heart and mind on Colgate; I felt like this was the best school and this is where I wanted to go. Only one problem—my SAT scores were not good enough.



Ok, I know you are going to be thinking “Grace, SAT scores don't even matter, just don't submit them.” Even though they were optional, they still played a huge role in decisions. I am very lucky that my parents were very involved in my school and college search. Even more so, I am grateful that they were willing to help me along. Instead of giving up on Colgate, my dad and I researched SAT tutors. I ended up doing private tutoring with Chariot Learning, where they claimed they were able to increase SAT scores by 100 points. Which is what I needed. However, only doing the two hours of tutoring a week is not going to get you there alone; you must be willing to put in the work. After hours of studying, I did it. I increased my score by exactly 110 points. I thought it would be good enough; however, the median SAT range for Colgate was between 1370 and 1500. I got 1360, but my GPA was 4.0. Honestly, I believed that it was going to work out—that I was going to be able to get in.



I applied for Early Decision at Colgate. I knew that my scores were on the lower side, so I figured that this would give me a better chance of getting in. There are many pros and cons to applying for ED. If you absolutely love a school and there is nowhere else you want to go, then do it. Something to keep in mind is that if you do apply for ED, schools may give you less financial aid. This was stressful for me because financial aid is super important for my college career. Colgate grants 100% of needs-based merit

I applied through the common app, and I totally recommend it. It just makes life so much easier.



Almost every college in the country uses it, except the California State Universities and Georgetown. In October, I sent in my first round of applications, including Colgate as my ED and all my free ones. A lot of schools give out application wavers. One cost that I did not really think about in the beginning was how expensive it is to APPLY to college. Applications range from \$50-\$70s, but if you are applying to 15 schools, it becomes quite costly. Some schools many free schools as you can. After writing my common app essay, I thought I was done. Oh, how wrong I was.

THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

My kitchen window looks out over the side yard, and I love nothing more than to open my windows in fall, once I have removed the screens from the windows, and shout,

"Heeeeeeeer chick - chick - chick - chick - chick!"

CHECK THESAURUS!

And the ladies come hopping and jumping at the same time, their feet skittering over the fallen leaves, in a frenzied flock toward the window. They wait underneath for the appearance of the bucket full of scraps, and eagerly peck up the pieces. If the food is particularly wonderful - popcorn, bread, or cheese - the snatches up pieces in their beaks and run off to protect and enjoy their hoard out of reach of their greedy sisters. They can't run and eat the larger bits at the same time, so it's hilarious to watch them tear around the yard, an entire strawberry plopped in their beaks, afraid to stop for fear another of the ladies will snatch it away and make it her own.

SMARTEK WORDS - WORD CHOICE IS IMPRESSIVE !!

ONIT

THIS IS OK

IS THIS TOPIC GOOD?

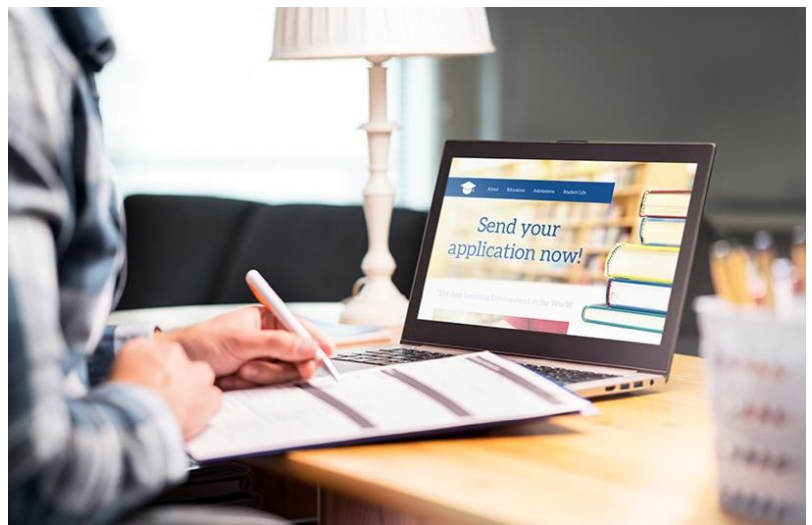
For my common app essay, I chose the second prompt, "The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?" Now, it was not a one-and-done type essay. I probably wrote 4 different ones before deciding on my final topic. I did not do a summer course, but I think it is up to the individual. I felt confident enough in my writing skills to do it on my own. I also understand that it can be expensive; one possibility you can explore is talking with your English teachers. All your teachers

want you to succeed in life and are always work with you to get you there. I reached out to Mrs. Muoio to ask if she would help me edit my essay, and in the best way possible, she destroyed my essay. Mrs. Muoio helped me the most in clearing up confusion, grammar, and emphasizing my key points. While the common essay may be the most daunting essay, it is not going to be the only one you write.

Supplemental essays—the bane of my existence. Once you apply to a school, they send you a portal. Each school has different portals—I recommend using the same password as it can get confusing. In the portals, you can see if you have submitted everything, including a transcript, letter of recommendation, financial aid, and more importantly, the supplemental essays. Not every school does these; however, I have found that about half do and half don't. And they are almost as important as the common app essay.

Luckily, many have similar prompts, so you can reuse your essays, but be sure to make them specific to each school. Colgate had three supplemental essays. Dickinson did not have any supplemental essays, but it did have an essay for a scholarship.

Unfortunately, no matter how much time and effort I put into my SAT scores and my essays, I ended up getting deferred from Colgate. It crushed me. Even though I was technically deferred, I knew that my best shot of getting in was in ED. It was no surprise that I ended up rejected. At first, I was confused, because I didn't understand why I didn't get in. Was it something I did? Was it the SAT scores, or my essays? Honestly, I don't know. The worst part for me was that I had no idea where I wanted to go. I had set my dreams on Colgate, and it didn't work out. This was super confusing because now I had to really investigate my other schools.



My backup school was Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, PA. This is a very tiny liberal arts school; the only reason I had heard of it was that my aunt and uncle went there. So, after Colgate, I once again set my sights on a school, and once again I got rejected. Eventually, I did get into some schools! I promise, I did not get rejected by all of them—just the ones I wanted to go to. I thought I had made up my mind and was going to go to John Carroll University in Cleveland, OH. This was when Dickinson came in to play.

When I visited Dickinson, I loved it, but I had already applied for ED at Colgate. I wish I saw Dickinson before I applied ED to Colgate because I really think I would have approached my applications differently. However, I was still hoping to go to F&M. When I got rejected from F&M, I figured that Dickinson was also going to be a rejection. But I got in! Honestly, this felt like a long time coming. I was waiting for a school that I really loved to accept me. I mentioned earlier that I applied for a scholarship at Dickinson; this ended up being a key factor for me. I got the Presidential scholarship and the Dickinson grant. After federal loans, Dickinson

will be cheaper than a SUNY for me. Private education for cheaper than a SUNY. This was incredibly important to me because I want to go into law, and I know that I am going to have student debt from law school, so I want to limit my undergraduate debt. Financial aid was not the deciding factor by any means; I did not commit until I visited Accepted Students' Day and got back on campus. I wanted to make sure I could see myself living there and that it was the right fit. Once I got on to campus, I fell in love with everything. I like the location—the school is right on the edge of a town, so I will not be completely remote but not in a big city. I highly recommend talking to one of the professors in the



department you are thinking about studying; this was the one factor that made me 100% confident in my decision to go to Dickinson. At the start of senior year, I never thought I would be going to Dickinson. But I am so happy with my decision and can't wait to start the next four years of my life.



If there is one piece of advice that I could give underclassmen, it would be to just have fun. That is so cheesy and cliché; however, it is true. Pittsford is a very intense school, from the classes to the students. Grades and test scores seem taboo; everything is a

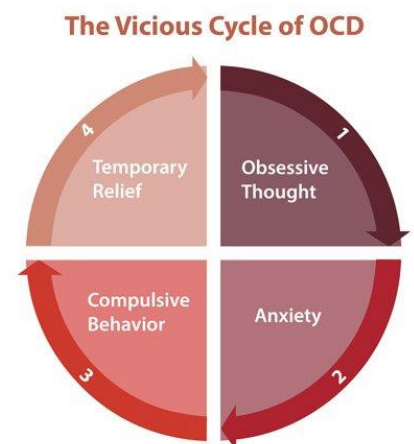
competition. I wish I wasn't so concerned about how everyone else was doing and just lived in the moment. One thing I wish I did was to join more clubs. I mean, I wish I had joined Mock Trial. Freshman year I wasn't interested in law, so I skipped out. Junior year I decided that I was going to do law, yet I never joined that club because I thought it was too late. It wasn't. So, if I could give one last piece of cliché advice, it would be to get involved in everything and anything. Just enjoy it while it lasts.



# The Truth About OCD

Watching characters like Sheldon from Big Bang Theory, Monica from Friends, or Schmitt from New Girl can be entertaining and it's funny to see them freak out if someone puts something out of place or to laugh at their need to have everything clean. But their obsessive compulsion disorder (OCD) tendencies and how it is displayed by Hollywood is not completely accurate and doesn't portray all of what OCD is. Television shows and movies usually only show the less extreme compulsions and one side of the disorder as well as they fail to show the obsessions, fear, and distress that follow the compulsions and affect people with OCD in their daily lives. The compulsions are usually completed due to an "irrational" fear and the person is worried about what might happen if they don't complete the habit or due to the feeling that they have to do it. Not doing the compulsion produces extreme amounts of stress and anxiety which makes it very hard to control your OCD. TV shows and movies ignore this side of OCD because it's not funny to watch someone have a mental breakdown after touching a doorknob, counting to thirty, or checking to make sure they locked the door ten times. This skews the public's perception of what OCD is and produces offensive stereotypes. Creating the image that OCD is comical and entertaining and something that has limited effects on the characters is extraordinarily misleading. The thought that OCD is not a disabling mental illness or that it is quirky and the person with OCD just loves making things tidy and clean could not be further from the truth. OCD looks different to every person suffering from it, someone with OCD can have the messiest room you have ever seen in your whole life but that does not mean they don't have it. These inaccurate messages about OCD cause those suffering to feel as though they are different and that they should be ashamed of their actions.

*By London Lindley*



OCD is truly an obsessive disorder that you are unable to control. It is tiring, stressful, disabling, anxiety-inducing, and extremely hard to ignore. The exhausting feeling of having to complete the habits or compulsions is incredibly draining and time-consuming. It can really consume your life and affect relationships, grades, and your overall wellbeing. The viewers of these shows think OCD is mostly about liking things tidy and clean with many saying things like, "OMG, I'm so OCD I can't have an unclean room". It's this distorted perception that the media and Hollywood present that is causing an untruthful view of OCD. OCD is very uncommonly spoken about or accurately portrayed in Hollywood but around 2-3 million adults and around half a million children suffer from OCD in the US. OCD is not something to be ashamed of or something that you should feel like you should hide. Without the truths of OCD being spoken and the stereotypes continuing to be spread, fewer people with OCD will feel comfortable reaching out and getting help. Normalizing OCD and educating people on mental illnesses can help so many people get better and get the necessary help. The crippling nature of OCD affects so many people, which is normal for those suffering. OCD is treatable with help from professionals and possibly medication. Anyone who thinks that they are suffering from OCD or anyone who is suffering from OCD getting help is completely normal and nothing to be ashamed of. Reach out to the school nurse, counselor, doctor, or trusted adult and get the help you need today! :)

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Answers on Page 19

# Retiring Interview: Mr. Doeblin

*By Yasmeen Rifai and Jisu Oh*

Before we get into the interview, we (the interviewers) wanted to quickly explain why we decided to get this interview from Mr. Doeblin. For those who may not know, Mr. Doeblin is one of our amazing English teachers here at Mendon. And after 20 years of teaching, he will be retiring at the end of this year. We have had the privilege of having him as our teacher before he leaves, and we felt like there was so much more to get to know about him. We would also like to acknowledge all the other incredible teachers retiring this year, and know that if we could, we would sit down with all of you and talk for hours. Now, without further ado, let's get into the interview!

**Jisu: For us as students, it's hard for us to imagine our teachers as students themselves. What were you like as a student and what was your high school experience like?**

Mr. Doeblin: Well, I grew up in Buffalo, I went to a public elementary school, then I went to an all-boys Jesuit high school. An all-boys school is very different, and there's pros and cons to that. But it was a good experience. I got good grades, I wanted to get into a good college, took honors classes, was in National Honors Society...I also did sports; I was a swimmer and a rower. One thing that was different about my era was I felt comfortable being part of different groups. I feel like today there are certain groups that stick together. I felt very comfortable moving between athletes, theatre kids, nerds, artists, and I had friends that were in all those different groups. I think it was a very rich way to learn.

**Yasmeen: Do you ever feel like you may have missed out on some of the perks of not being a religious, gender-separated school?**

Mr. Doeblin: Definitely. I started high school in 1972 or '73, and I graduated in 1977; people were very open minded then. So, the religious education I got wasn't rigid at all. For instance, we had to take a religion class

every year, and we would go and tutor kids in the poorer, city area. And that was a rich experience. But nobody was drilling anything into you. So, the concerns of priests that taught me were that of social justice, while today a lot of Catholic priests may be anti-this or anti-that. It was a very different time.

**Yasmeen: Moving a little bit forward in your life, what was the transition from being a banker to being an English teacher like? And is there ever anything you miss about being a Wall Street banker?**

Mr. Doeblin: I went to college not really knowing what I wanted to do. I think I was intentionally anti-vocational, but as I got closer to graduation I had decided to major in English. There's lots of things you can do with an English degree—as it turns out, you can be a banker. Banks want people that can communicate, write, and interact with people. And that's one of the good things about banking—it's not a monolithic career, and there is a large variety in the things you can do. Some positives for me were that I got to travel and I got to work with other smart, capable, educated people who were also ambitious and career oriented. But I reached a certain age where I felt like I wasn't sure I wanted to do that the rest of

my life, and maybe there was something more important I could do. I realized a lot of the people that had been influential in my life had been teachers. So, I started taking night classes at Nazareth, and since I had my English degree (and my masters in business), it was easy to be certified to be a teacher.

One thing that was hard was that you reach a certain level of confidence in your job. Going from feeling that to feeling totally incompetent in my early 40s, walking in front of a room full of teenagers, and feeling like I didn't know what I was doing, was daunting. Looking back, it was another growing experience, but that's hard.

**Yasmeen: Do you have any advice for us about our futures and how we should go forth into the world?**

Doebelin: I would say, in general, we foster this achievement mentality. And there's some good in that, but also a dark side. Try and remember that grades and test scores aren't the end-all-be-all. And of course, I was like that too at one point; maybe it's a different world now. Embrace your curiosity about what you're doing, about the world, about each other, and if you do that, other things will fall into place. And part of the reason I force Walden down your throats is that he does raise questions about "what kind of life do I want to lead?" and "what does success mean to me?" I think pondering those things are important. Keep an open mind.

**Jisu: On that note, is there a character in any of the books we've read this year that you feel you relate to?**

Doebelin: Not Chillingworth, not Tom Buchanan, not Dimmesdale.

Jisu: All of them have issues, so maybe it's best if you don't!

Doebelin: Maybe Hester Prynne? I like Hester's radicalism. She was fierce and loyal, and thought for herself but was kind of broken in a way. She's a feminist; I'm a feminist.

**Jisu: We're going to go into our rapid-fire question portion of this interview where you have to answer with the first thing that comes to your mind. Ready?**

Doebelin: Alright!

**Jisu: What is a movie you're embarrassed to like/your favorite movie?**

Doebelin: Moonstruck.

**Yasmeen: Favorite book—now or of all time?**

Doebelin: Slaughterhouse Five.

**Jisu: Favorite band/type of music?**

Doebelin: Bob Dylan.

**Yasmeen: Favorite scent?**

Doebelin: This is the easiest one so far: lavender.

**Jisu: Very first job?**

Doebelin: Newspaper boy, and you would get paid by the paper. It was child labor. No, I'm just kidding. I don't think they let children do that anymore.

**Jisu: How would you describe your teaching experience here at Mendon in three words?**

Doebelin: Rewarding, fun, and challenging.

Jisu: Thank you so much for indulging in this.

Yasmeen: Yes, thank you so much again for your time, I think a lot of students want this kind of inside look at their teachers that maybe can't be shared the 40 minute class period, so thank you for that.

# The Strength of Quiet

(A Look into the Mind of an Introvert)

Gossip spreads like wildfire. Share a secret, spread the news, and all around us, people gasp. “SHUT UP,” they say. You hear it daily—in the hallways during passing time, floating across the lunchroom, every morning as the announcements are read—but who listens? This is one of many things that separates us: while introverts welcome the literal translation, every extrovert in the room continues to chatter away. By Piper Wilson

Over time, we’ve forgotten what these labels really mean. Most people simply see the division in black and white: introverts are quiet, extroverts are loud. But there’s vivid colors here, too—introverts like myself don’t necessarily shy away from a good conversation, and extroverts can be equally overwhelmed in social situations. Let’s refresh ourselves.



Extroverts are people who prefer high-stimulatory environments and tend to flourish in groups. These kinds of people crave energy and excitement; they welcome noise and stray from solitary environments. Inversely, introverts savor “alone-time” and relish independence. They generally enjoy lower stimulation from their surroundings.

*Still seems straightforward to me. Where’s the “color” you mentioned?* I hear you. What we have to recognize is the overlapping that can occur between intro- and extroverts.

Not only do the two share these traits, but there is also a third type of person: ambiverts. These people express traits of both. So, an ambivert might enjoy their large group of friends, but feel the need to see them periodically to “recharge.” Or they may be the kind of person who has one or two close friends they don’t get exhausted around and spend virtually every waking moment with them.

Recently I’ve learned the introverted mind is truly a foreign land to most extroverts. *Oh, you like to be alone, you don’t really want to talk*—that’s not wrong, but it’s not always true, either. From my own personal experience, neither of those generalizations are completely accurate. I think of wanting to be alone and not wanting to participate in discussions as a “shy” trait, which is separate from introversion altogether. Shyness is feeling timid and reserved when in the presence of others; introversion is more along the lines of needing less stimulation than (what we classify as) average to flourish.

From my personal experience, I do spend a lot of time on my own. But it’s not always because I want to—it’s because I need to. In the same way that staring at a screen for too long or reading a convoluted paragraph may give anybody a headache, my head pounds after spending too much time with a large group of people. Sometimes an ice pack works, sometimes a few minutes outside...but often what I really need to help my headache is an hour or so alone. I need to be in my own world—reading a good book, baking brownies, going for a run—before I feel well enough to return to a larger group environment.



As for not wanting to talk, this is much more a trait of “shy” people. Introverts may tend to refrain from talking and allow others to take center stage, but personally, it’s often because I feel I have nothing to say. When conversations begin on topics I have no knowledge of, I sit back and listen. Trying to verbalize my own thoughts and learn about this unknown topic would be exhausting, and I would rather absorb information from people who seem to know more about this topic than I do. However, if people start talking about music, *New Girl*, or places to get good coffee? I’m here for it. I’ll share my thoughts because I know I have something valuable to add.

But you’re not wrong. Introverts do tend to stay quieter than extroverts (and ambiverts). What results in the label of “shy” on many introverts is a classroom culture of “style over substance.” Participating is seen as more important and more valuable than having something to add to the conversation. When people pipe up just to reiterate a point that’s already been made in different words, that’s style. Introverts favor substance: when we speak up, we’ve probably thought hard about the point for a while and believe we have something new and relevant to add to the conversation.



Sudoku Puzzle 5 Solution

6	4	2	9	5	8	7	1	3
5	1	7	3	4	2	6	9	8
9	8	3	7	1	6	4	2	5
8	9	5	2	6	1	3	4	7
4	2	6	5	7	3	1	8	9
3	7	1	8	9	4	5	6	2
7	6	9	1	8	5	2	3	4
1	3	8	4	2	7	9	5	6
2	5	4	6	3	9	8	7	1

These introverted traits result in strong leaders. Initially, it might not make sense. But introverts—strong listeners and meaningful contributors—are receptive and adaptable. They also tend to have a careful and sensitive temperament, resulting in increased creativity and empathy for those around them.

But don’t discount extroverts! They have this natural ability to socialize and converse with others. In the way an introvert may get nervous, sweaty palms before going up to an acquaintance or an adult, an extrovert knows how to start the conversation. And once it starts, no matter the personality, it just flows.

Neither introversion nor extroversion is “bad.” There are benefits to both personalities, but people tend to overlook so many of the benefits to being introverted. Quiet environments and low stimulation are essential for introverts. Yet high energy situations are necessary for extroverts. So how can we thrive together?

It’s about placing yourself in situations that are right for you but finding a healthy balance between high and low stimulatory settings. We must stop favoring style and high energy and start harmonizing animated groupwork with quiet independence. I’ve found if I start feeling exhausted or bored, it may be the situation I’m putting myself in. Maybe I’ve been quiet for too long; maybe I’ve been chatting someone’s ear off. Usually, it’s the former. But the next time you start to feel exhausted, check in with yourself. Maybe you need to have a conversation with someone—with anyone at all. Or maybe, put in your headphones and tune into your own thoughts. Maybe you’ll surprise yourself with how nice the quiet can be.

# ABOUT RUNESTONE

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## RESPONDING TO THE PUBLICATION

Letters to the editors may be submitted electronically to our email. Letters may be published in our print editions and may be edited.

## ABOUT US

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*Thanks for Reading!*