

it's lit

CHAUCER HIGH LITERARY MAGAZINE



POTUS, NOT US

Students reflect and share their feelings on current immigration crisis

INVERSION AVERSION

Tim Morton, a CHS Junior, shares a breathtaking ecological poem

"LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT--I'M NOT

A powerful essay on the diversity of gender identities here at CHS

are you content?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STANLEY FISH / _____-SEEING EYES

JACQUES DERRIDA / WORDS ARE MEANINGLESS

ANIS BAWARSHI / SAVED BY THE BELL

JEFFREY NEALON

CO AUTHOR: SUSAN SEARLS GIROUX / AMERICA THE GREAT?

ADRIENNE RICH / LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT--I'M NOT

TIMOTHY MORTON / A FEW LINES COMPOSED ABOVE CHAUCER

REFERENCES



-seeing eyes

Were I a priest
My youth punctuated by candles, altars, holy writ,
A subway sign would
transform before my eyes; a Sunday Sermon I
would see among the dotted
lines as I clutched the straphanger for
support

Were I a scientist
My morning walk would be a study
The plants cropping up beneath the snow
would be a
personalized, private lecture
On the hardiness of life, an invitation to study
patterns of
growth and the reality of rebirth

Were I an artist
The traces of holographic oil spills in the
parking lot would
cause my heart to flutter
I'd find the exquisite airiness of cloud-murals
breathtaking
and wonder how the artist achieved the
perfect balance of weight and
weightlessness in their medium

I am a writer
I find essay prompts inked on the forearm of the
gas station clerk
Discover anthologies on the brink of existence
hovering with a robe of invisibility, on the surface
of oil paintings
Menus are but couplets, teaching me to find
rhyme and rhythm among the mundane

We are what surrounds us, that much is clear
Our knowledge is conditional upon our community,
We see what we most deeply desire to see.

**our entire system of language
and communication is
arbitrary**



**words are meaningless.
they will fail us.**

**Jacques Derrida
CHS SENIOR**

saved by the bell:

BY ANIS BAWARSHI
CHS Sophomore

Once I was a daydreaming tween, my mind full of misconceptions and Hallmark movies, prepared for a mind-blowing high school experience. The expectations in my mind were so high, and felt somehow so attainable.

Picture this: I would make the Varsity football team my Sophomore year, start dating a cheerleader by second term, and most likely be nominated for Prom King by the end of the year.

Little did I know, my convoluted expectations of what I would be experiencing came positively crashing down around me shortly after enrolling here.

I soon realized I am absolutely, positively a klutz with the pigskin. No, I'm certainly not dating a cheerleader, but honestly, it's rare that I even see people dating around here in the first place. Only the SBO's and nerds even show up at school dances, so being Prom King would honestly present a major hit to my social standing, anyway.

The expectations I had of high school were completely and entirely flouted by what I actually have had unfold to me. And it makes me wonder, then—where does this come from? It's like some type of code, some type of very well-kept secret, a myth of the teenage years that Hollywood movie producers of YA films insist on producing, despite year after year of blatant contradictions to the stereotype. I'm pretty sure I'm not the only one feeling this way. My little siblings are already hooked on High School Musical and Saved by the Bell—though, to be fair, I'm pretty sure anyone truthfully expecting their High School morning to be punctuated with show tunes to the beat of the ringing bell might need some help.

I wish somebody had told me what to expect, so I wouldn't have spend years formulating an idea in my head of what this would be like, only to have my preconception come crashing down around me, hard.

Maybe we should let this go, then. Maybe we stop letting Hollywood and our whole daydream of high school stop swirling around in the minds of our young impressionable Junior High Students. Or maybe, we don't.



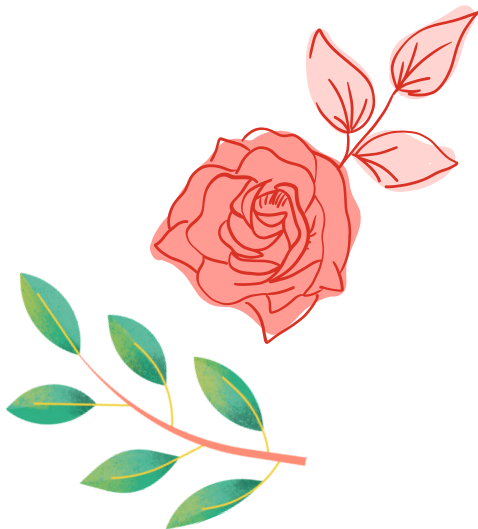
America the Great?

BY JEFFREY NEALON & SUSAN SEARLS GIROUX
CHS Seniors

Families are ripped apart. Wages are far from sustaining life. The populations that have allowed America to become what it is have been exploited, trod upon, and disadvantaged since the founding of this country, and the division is only getting worse.

We can't believe that we are an exception here at Chaucer. We happen to exist in a bubble of sorts, 93% of our student body checks the box of "white" every time they take the SAT, sign up for classes, or take the Census.

So let's take a look, then, at our little microcosm here at Chaucer High.



Our school is positioned on indigenous Dakota land. Our custodial staff is composed of exclusively Latinx individuals. Our food is largely imported from Mexico and California, where it is harvested and processed by Mexican farm workers. We drive around in our cars blasting Kendrick Lamar and Solange, and the “n” word is spoken in the halls more times a day than I think we would like to admit.

We are nothing without immigrants. We are nothing without black people. We are nothing without indigenous people, without people of color.

Why, then, are we treating people who don't look like us, who don't act like us, like we have something they don't?

The current political climate is in no way an example for us to follow. We can do better. We must do better.



Let's get one thing straight--I'm not

**Adrienne Rich explains the realities of being a member of
the LGBTQ+ community**
CHS Sophomore

I'm gay.

It's kind of the only thing most people know about me.

Having been out of the closet since 8th grade, I've had to get used to helping hold people's hand through the process of the swallowing and

digesting the fact that I am, indeed, attracted to other females.

Historically speaking, I have it easy. In 1656, lesbians were administered the death penalty in New Haven. Today, in Afghanistan, homosexuals

are legally allowed to be stoned if

caught in homosexual behavior. Until 1967, homosexual behavior was illegal in

England. Some might look at my walk of life and point out that I certainly have

it better here, and now, than other homosexuals in different situations than I.

So yeah, thanks. Thank you for not murdering me, for not stoning me, for not calling the police on me because I like girls. I appreciate

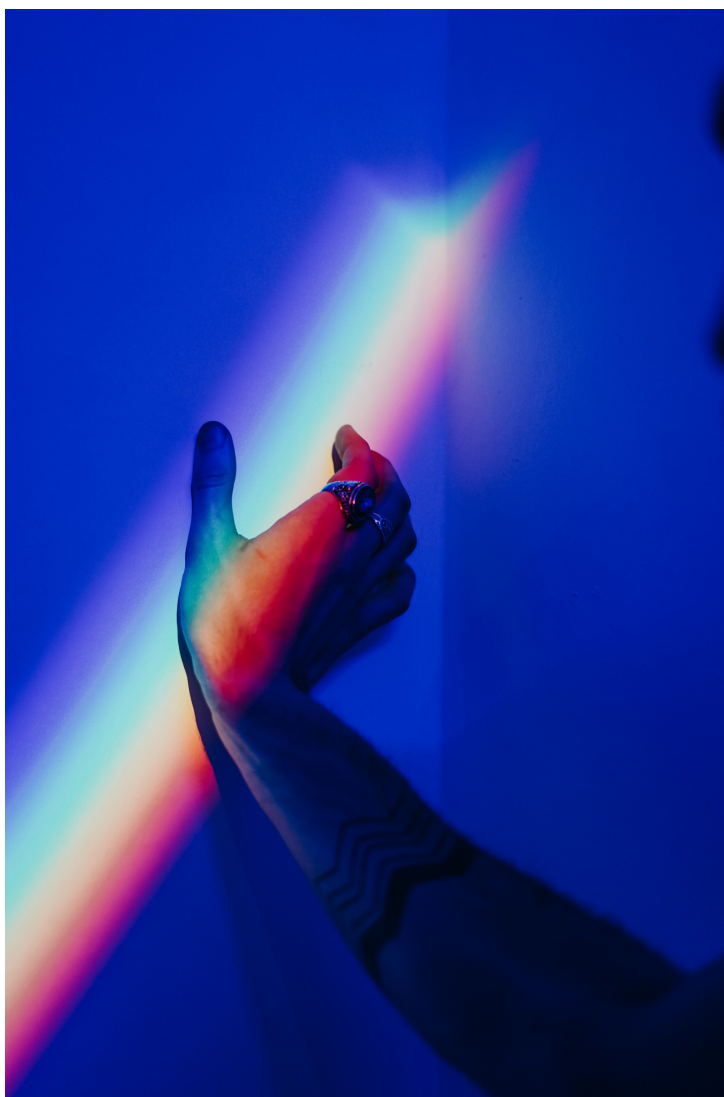
that, and certainly wouldn't have it any other way.

I am not going to say, though, that I am without a personalized punishment.

Anytime I take my girlfriend to a dance, people will call her my “friend”. I once got invited to a sleepover with some friends and was gently awakened in the night to the sound of my alleged friends whispering “I hope she doesn’t try to touch me”. The amount of homophobic slurs I get tossed at me in the hallways is getting out of hand.

But, you know, I’m alive. I’m here. And I’m not going to pretend to be straight because it makes you feel a little more comfy.

Because maybe one day my great grandkid can walk proudly down the hallway of her high school and be seen as a true equal.



A Few Lines Composed a Few Miles above Chaucer

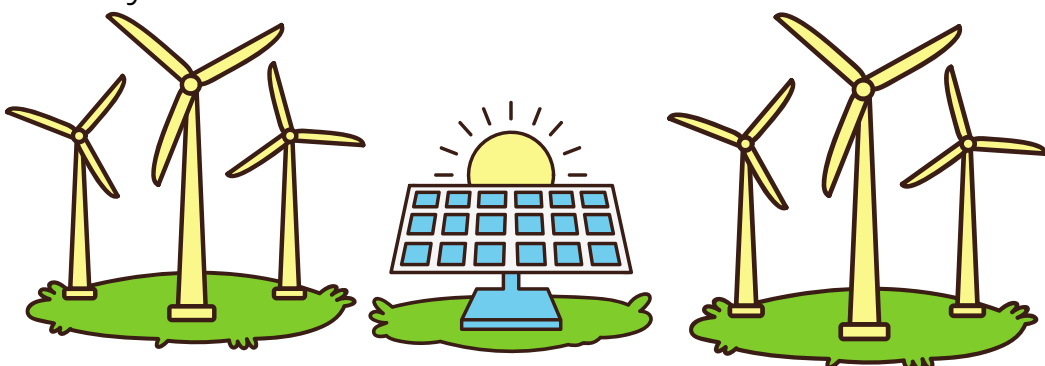
BY TIMOTHY MORTON
CHS Senior

Four years have past; four summers, with the length of an
endless eternity! And again I see this valley full of inversion from the cars,
and the factories, and stoves, and cows. With a soft haze it blankets these
hills, these mountains. Once again, I do behold the posters plastered
among the
halls of my educational establishment. "Save the Environment"—a plea to
the
void, a naïve evasion of
realization of interconnectedness and responsibility. "Tree-Hugger", "Love
your
Mother", they say, not realizing the utter distance and disconnect they
create.

At this season
I wish for us a recognition and a realization of our amazing and terrifying
interconnectedness. Examine the turbines, the water filtration plants, the
windmills.

These beauteous
forms, though not seen as such by many, are a work of art, a token of the
ecological realities that surround us.

Realizing how
dear our world truly is, and that we, and the world, are one and the same!



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