1. I have participated in Model UN for the past three years. I have attended both the Pitt and Westminster Model UN Conferences in 2012, 2013, and 2014. In 2013, I have received delegation awards at both of these conferences. I have also been a delegate at Model European Union in 2012. I participated in Model African Union in 2012 and 2013. I was a delegate at Duquesne Model UN in 2012, 2013, and 2014. I attended Johns Hopkins Model UN in 2013 and 2014, where I was awarded an honorable mention. I have also taken part in my high school’s training conference, the Riverview Model UN conference. In 2012 and 2013 I have participated as a delegate, and I was a co-chair at RMUNC this year. I was a delegate in Bismarck’s Cabinet during the Prussian Unification at Princeton Model UN last year.
2. Following the recent Scottish Referendum, many Separatist Movement s have been reignited, including Veneto, Flanders, Catalonia, and Hong Kong. If even one of these regions is successful in secession, the next major global conflict will be upon us. Although the recent vote in Scotland did not result in separation from the United Kingdom, it is probable that the next referendum will. Opinion polls from the past few months show 45% of the Scottish population voting for independence, which matches the results of the actual vote, while in 2007, on 32% of the population voted “yes” to separation. Another factor in the next referendum is teenage voters. The results of similar polls for teenagers have resulted in 43% of 16 and 17 year olds voting for separation. Given the large increase in votes for independence, it is probably that Scotland will separate from the United Kingdom at the next referendum. Although the Scottish outcome didn’t result in succession, it acted as a catalyst for other separatist movements, the most prominent of which being Veneto. An online poll taken throughout Venice showed that 97% of the population is in favor of breaking off from Italy. Similarly, protesters in Hong Kong have been rallying for the decolonization and universal suffrage for the region. A recent ruling against this in Beijing has sparked riots throughout China, and has increased the prominence of both police violence and aggressive separatist groups. Both of these cities are essential in their country’s economy, and if they vote for independence, Italy and China will suffer major economic loss. The potential of some regions separating from their current countries will also have an impact on the UN. The UN and EU will have to decide whether or not to recognize these new areas accept them as member states.
3. My favorite Utopian future was created by James Cameron in his 2009 film “*Avatar*”. “*Avatar*” is set on the moon Pandora, where humanoid inhabitants called Na’vi are spiritually and physically in touch with nature. Pandora is made up of lush forests, waterfalls, and an abundance of wildlife. The entire planet centers on a tree sacred to the Na’vi, which holds their memories and symbolizes their culture. This is my favorite Utopian future because of how successfully it parallels historic conflict and identifies cultural issues presently occurring. The film’s antagonists are humans who invade Pandora to exploit their natural oil deposits. As the miners arrive, they disregard the wellbeing of the natives and use force to obtain the ore. This parallels Spain’s conquest of the New World in order to obtain gold and other riches. Also, Scientists are brought to Pandora in order to teach Na’vi children human culture and language. This is similar to missionary work, which began during the Age of Discovery in Latin America and Africa. The film also presents the Na’vi oppression as similar to that of the Native Americans during European explorers and colonists. “Avatar” also draws attention to the need for environmental reform here on Earth. In the movie, Earth’s natural resources have been pillaged and exhausted by humans, who have been forced to take refuge on neighboring plants in order to survive. It highlights human greed and our disregard for life that doesn’t benefit our own.
4. My favorite dystopian future was created by Ray Bradbury in the novel “*Fahrenheit 451*” This society is alarmingly similar to our own: substance abuse is prevalent, electronics are overtaking human interaction, and the population’s short attention span has resulted in a quickened pace of life. The people in this society have reached a point of overwhelming conformity and reject ideas that are hard to understand. They do not understand the idea of books or reading, so it is outlawed. Instead, these people watch and interact with their TV shows. They are lazy. They do little work, and are unconcerned with the preservation of their lives. Due to the increase in technology during the past years, it is easy to imagine our society slipping into habits such as these.
5. I think it is much easier to imagine the ending of the world than the end of capitalism. This is both on a large and small scale. Because I was raised knowing of and being part of a capitalist society, being part of a different economic system is so foreign to me, that it would be easier to imagine myself not existing than to imagine myself existing without capitalism. The end of capitalism is hard to imagine on a large scale, too. Nearly every country with liberal democracies and authoritarian systems use capitalism as their economic system. These countries include the US, Canada, Mexico, and most EU member states. In order for capitalism to end, many countries would have to switch economic systems, and because capitalism is so closely linked with democracy, many countries would have to switch governments as well. The world’s trade is very reliant on capitalism, and would have to be entirely rethought and restructured without it. Lastly, I think that it is human nature to fear the unknown, and because there are so any people like me in the world that have grown up surrounded by capitalism, it would take an enormous leap of faith to dive into a new economic system that is foreign to them. People are scared and people are stubborn, so it is more likely for people to cease to exist than for them to accept a change as great as this.
6. In 2050, I will be taking my Model UN team to PMUNC where they will be discussing were they will be in 2076.