

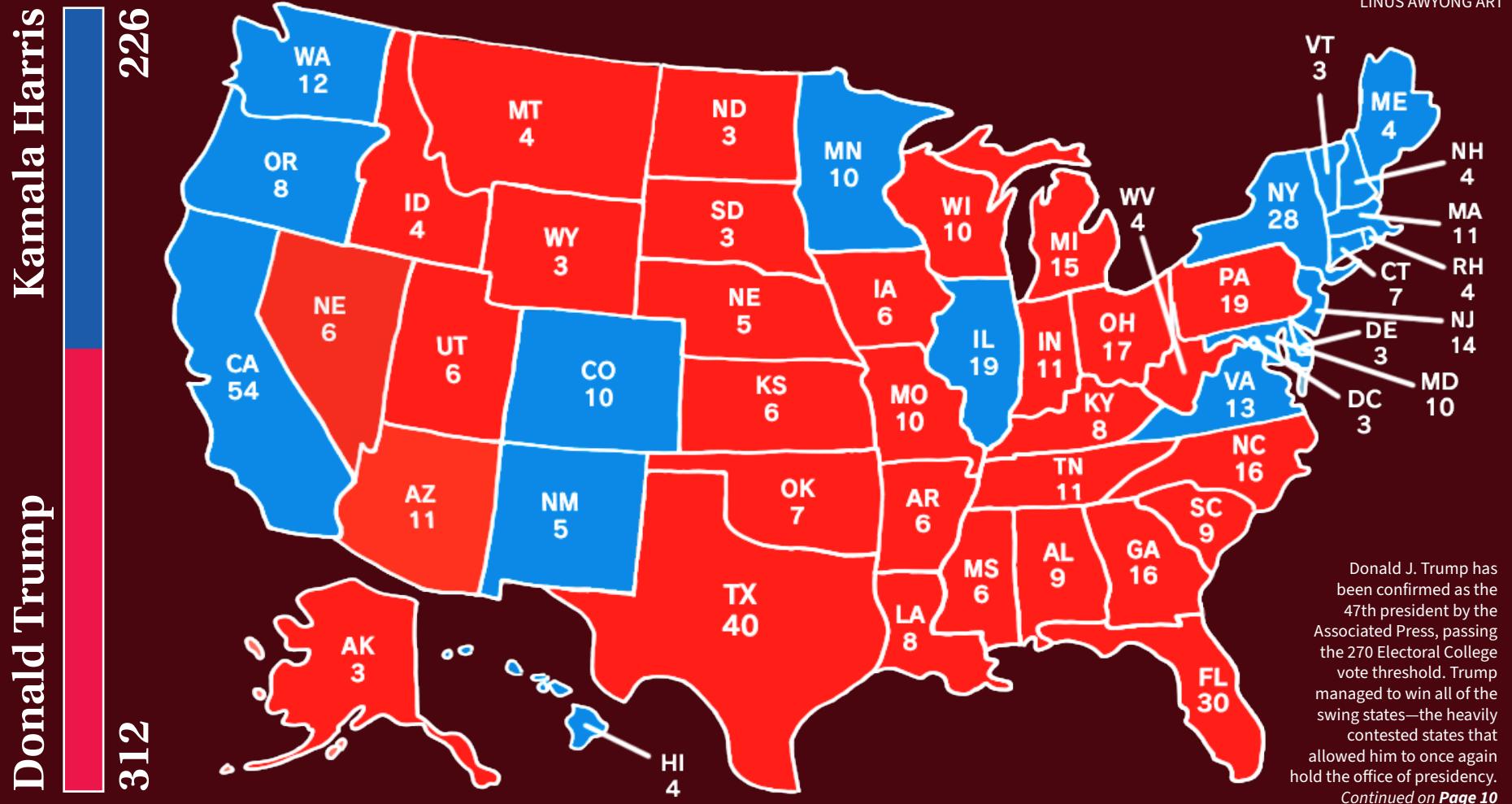
# thechargeraccount

Vol. W No. II

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Design by Caitlynn Sue

## TRUMP WINS ELECTION



### Billionaire Ownership of Newspapers Incites Political Controversy

*Under Jeff Bezos's leadership, The Washington Post breaks its precedent of presidential endorsements*

THE CHARGER ACCOUNT EDITORIAL BOARD

Amazon reigns as the world's largest e-commerce and technology conglomerate. The Washington Post is the United States's third-largest newspaper by print and digital readership. Both businesses are, surprisingly, owned by the same billionaire: Jeff Bezos.

In August 2013, Bezos purchased The Washington Post for \$250 million. While initially playing an active role, he became relatively removed until last month, when he made a decision that caused the newspaper to lose over 10% of its subscriptions.

On Oct. 25, The Washington Post's publisher and chief executive officer William Lewis published a column stating that the newspaper would not endorse a candidate in the presidential election, despite having done so every election for the past 36 years. While Lewis stressed that this decision upheld the newspaper's mission and was made without any outside influence, the fact that three editorial board members and over 250,000 readers canceled their subscriptions suggests a deeper motivation at play.

Readers held divided opinions after the controversy; some believed that newspapers should not endorse candidates in the first place and commended The Washington Post's decision. In fact, on Oct. 29, YouGov published a poll of 6030 Americans, revealing that 47% believed that newspapers should not endorse political candidates. However, others pulled back their

subscriptions, calling out the billionaire behind the paper.

Newspapers are meant to be unbiased sources of truth. Yet, all prominent newspapers today lie somewhere on the political bias spectrum. Editorials are meant to showcase the shared political views behind a publication, so abruptly removing presidential endorsements puts Bezos's control over The Washington Post under suspicion—especially since an endorsement for Harris was in progress before the cancellation drafted.

Billionaires seek to maintain relations with politicians in order to receive corporate tax benefits. In fact, The Guardian reported that a surge in the stock market added \$64 billion to the wallets of the world's ten wealthiest people—including Bezos—after they publicly commended Donald Trump for his presidential victory on Nov. 7. When billionaires' leverage extends into public media, they are given the power to cloud the path of free press with their own political biases and financial interests, breaking years of precedent all in the name of lining their pockets.

The Washington Post's motto is "Democracy Dies in Darkness." Ironic, considering the looming darkness of Bezos and other billionaires. With a new president in office soon, these ties further risk censorship and political control over journalism, harming the ideals of truth and liberty that it stands to uphold.

### Local Politics

**Proposition 2**  
*passed*



Will authorize California to issue \$10 billion of bonds to renovate facilities at K-12 public schools and community colleges.

**Proposition 33**  
*not passed*



Would have allowed cities and counties to expand existing rent control laws.

**Proposition 36**  
*passed*



Will increase punishments for repeated theft and drug offenses, including fentanyl.

**Jimmy Panetta**  
California District 19 Representative

**Adam Schiff**  
California Senator

**Nicole Gribstad**  
SJUSD school board Trustee Area 5

### Class of 1974 Hosts Reunion

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### Sorry Buddy, There's No Oxford Study

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### Cheating Uncovered; Accountability Discovered

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# Homecoming Monarchy Becomes Hollywood Royalty

LAUREN LAW STAFF WRITER

Beneath a canopy of twinkling decorations and shimmering lights, melodies traveled through the air, transforming the school into a dazzling homage to "La La Land." Aside from traditional Homecoming festivities this year, ASB also introduced new gender-neutral royalty categories, allowing for more students to feel represented.

The school's annual Homecoming dance took place on Oct. 12 and was based on the popular musical "La La Land." ASB marketed the dance as "La La Leland" to tie in with the theme and connect it back to the school. The dance activities included photo stands, such as a red carpet and a 360 photo booth with a rotating camera. "La La Land" played in the GBA for students to watch while they snacked on the variety of chips and candy available. In addition to the small bites, ASB parents operated a mocktail bar, serving four hand crafted drinks including Orange Spritz, Shirley Temple, Cotton Candy and Mojito mocktails.

Many students held divided opinions about Homecoming. Junior **Abigail Polous** chose to attend because she wanted to

"I would have added a few more categories, such as 'Best Original Score' for music. Some of the titles are more inclusive, such as 'Best Visual Performance' and 'Best Stunt Performance,' as these nominations are based on abilities. While it is easier to be nominated if you are popular, the new nominations are still accurate because I do not believe Chargers will nominate someone unless they deserve it."

- Freshman Nao Sawaguchi  
Quotebox: Student opinions on the new Homecoming royalty titles

get dressed up and take pictures with her friends, but she was disappointed by the DJ's lackluster music selections that failed to energize the mosh pit. On the other hand, Sophomore **Mica Montali** enjoyed the free drinks and the opportunity to spend time with friends outside of the classroom setting while indulging in the chaos and excitement of the dance.

"This year's dance was mediocre in comparison to the casino theme last year, which seemed more organized with better music and decorations. I also felt that there were significantly fewer people at the dance than in previous years, and a lot of my friends chose not to attend. I enjoyed the night with my friends, but it was mainly the before and after activities rather than the dance itself," Senior **Anjani Shah** said.

COMPILED BY TERESA SUN STAFF WRITER

## Class of 1974 Hosts Reunion

ARIEL LEE STAFF WRITER

Students gather beneath the large oak tree in the middle of the quad, while others smoke in designated areas. High-pitched rotary dial phones, the only form of technology present on campus, ring in the distance. Although this scene seems incredibly different from Chargers' lives today, it was very common at the school in the 1970s.

Last spring, reunion organizer Tere Johnson attended the school's 50th anniversary celebration and wanted to organize a school tour for the entire class of 1974. The reunion took

CATHERINE NGUYEN ART

Poll: Would you go to a 50 year high school reunion?

Yes

79.4%

Class of 1974

No

20.6%

102 STUDENTS POLLED  
COMPILED BY LILIANA CHAI STAFF WRITER

place on Sept. 28, and is the first of its kind at the school. However, **Meg Walsh**, Activities Director, mentioned that she would like to host more in the future if it fits into the school schedule.

The school faculty, ASB and other parent volunteers worked hard to prepare for the reunion. Bolt, the mascot, was present to welcome the class of 1974 in the gym, along with a performance from the cheer team. Then, students and staff showed the alumni around the school, touring the facilities and classrooms. Alumni were excited to see what changed and what remained the same; for example, Walsh mentioned that the music room is still the same as it was in 1974, while the library and CRC underwent many changes. Not only did the facilities change, but the material and teaching methods have also been transformed. The class of 1974 had more

hands-on classes than current students, according to the alumni.

"I had a lot of fun performing for the class of 1974, and I learned a lot about the different lives students experienced in the 1970s. For example, the alumni talked about how they used to have smoking sections for both students and teachers. The alumni were also able to buy many types of snacks, differing from our regular meal options," Sophomore **Thea Cuboni**, Junior Varsity Cheerleader, said.

Today, technology is an important part of students' daily lives; they use it to complete assignments, socialize and play games. However, for the class of 1974, they used standard rotary phones, typewriters and chalkboards rather than digital projectors, smartphones and computers.

Opportunities were different as well. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, just over 62% of California high school students today attend college after graduation, while in the 1970s, only 48% of students were enrolled in a college. However, it was much more common for students to obtain jobs even without a college degree in the 1970s.

"My mom went to high school in the United States, and based on what she has told me, high school seems a lot more difficult now. With

Homecoming is an American high school tradition where students come together to celebrate their school pride. It is traditionally a week-long event where spirit days and student engagement activities lead up to the Homecoming game and dance on Friday and Saturday respectively, allowing for a shared celebratory experience.

To kickstart the school's Homecoming week, ASB organized interactive games for students to participate in every weekday. Prior to the week, each of the four classes created a music video, singing along to a Disney classic. The videos were played on the news on Monday for Chargers to vote for their favorite. During the Homecoming rally on Friday, the winning grade was revealed: the senior class. Other games included a "Guess the Song Title" activity and "star gazing." In the former, ASB blasted songs over the intercom, and

WEI WANG PHOTO  
  
Senior **Logan Medeiros** and Senior **Suhad Khayo**, winners of "Best Leading Performance," pose at the football stadium.

classrooms would compete to call in and say the correct song title. In the latter, five students and faculty members wore large gold stars around their necks, and the goal of the game was for students to take a picture with all five.

ASB decorated the school halls with dangling stars and flourishing musical note designs throughout the week. Bold banners embellished the walls to transform Leland into a realm of "La La Land."

Beside games and rallies, royalty is important to the American Homecoming experience. This year, ASB introduced new royalty categories in an effort to break away from nominations based

on popularity. These titles carried the theme of "La La Land" and resembled gender-neutral Academy Awards. Rather than "King" and "Queen," two seniors could be elected for "Best Leading Performance," and "Best Supporting Performance"

replaced "Prince" and "Princess"; four Chargers from each grade were elected for this category. "Best Scriptwriter" was awarded based on intelligence, "Best Comedy Performance" went to the funniest Charger, "Best Visual Performance" for the most charismatic and talented student, "Best Costume" for the best dressed and "Best Stunt Performance" for their most athletic peer.

Many students considered the nomination positions to focus more on students' qualities and achievements. These descriptive titles allowed for a wider range of students to be nominated for positions that better illustrated and represented their characters.

CATHERINE NGUYEN AND CAITLYNN SUE ART

"It is nice that ASB took a step back from the traditional norms of King and Queen, yet changing it to 'Actor' and 'Actress' did not feel much more inclusive; it was merely a shift towards making the nominations more in line with the Homecoming theme. It would have been nice to see a change implemented where couples were discouraged from winning, as couples have frequently won categories together in the past, excluding others in the process. The new nominations are hardly an effective effort in straying away from typical titles based solely on student popularity. With the secondary categories this year—such as 'Most Athletic'—the ballot is so small the vote comes down to who you know and who you like the most."

- Senior **Titus Hsu**

Overall, this year's Homecoming dance, while visually appealing, left some students feeling underwhelmed. However, the new, innovative approach to the Homecoming court was a step toward inclusivity and reducing typical popularity-based nominations. This flip in royalty nominations might mark a change for more inclusivity, leaving behind traditional popularity-based nominations.

"Although I was not at the reunion, I attended school here during the 1970s. My overall experience was great; I took fun classes like Journalism, I had amazing teachers, I was a part of multiple sports and I had a job after school. Today, the students focus more on academics and are missing out on the broader array of classes that we used to offer, such as vocational classes. My biggest piece of advice for current students is to do more than academics: join clubs, do sports, be in Speech and Debate or Drama—experience more than sitting in the classroom. As for our seniors, I encourage them to just relax now as they will all get into college and have a good time," **Rob Miller**, Social Studies Department, said.

Johnson believes that the school has changed for the better because while the buildings themselves are similar, the students today appear much more focused on their future. He describes how students from his time at the school tended to embody a "live for today" mentality, while in the present, many students plan more strategically and are propelled by ambitious goals.

The school's class of 1974 and current cheerleading team gather in the gym for a photo.



MEG WALSH PHOTO

# Second Harvest Returns to its Roots

WINSTON CHU STAFF WRITER

**F**ounded in 1988, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley works to ensure that every family in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties has nutritious food to eat. The nonprofit organization's mission is to end hunger; every month, they provide around \$200 worth of groceries each to 500,000 people in the community. Yet this holiday season, they aspire to better serve their clients through significant changes that will improve distribution operations.

Second Harvest relies on volunteers and donations to sustain their organization. Across two warehouses in Silicon Valley, volunteers work in assembly lines at sorting centers to fill boxes with a variety of produce—which is provided by Second Harvest's 400 partners for free. In fact, half of the produce they distribute is supplied directly from farms. The produce boxes, along with other dry goods and proteins such as rice, beans, milk and eggs, are transported to drive

through distribution centers. With this style of distribution, more volunteers help load the food into cars or shopping carts for clients who do not have vehicles or prefer to wait in line.

While the drive through model of distribution has been successful, in August, Second Harvest switched back to the widely implemented method prior to the pandemic: the farmers' market style. Under a farmers' market distribution, clients exit their car and choose the food they prefer, rather than being handed a box and leaving. Tracy Weatherby, Second Harvest's Vice President of Programs and Services and Strategy and Advocacy, explains that the farmers' market is the most respectful way to distribute food. Similar to a supermarket, people are able to choose the food they want, instead of being given a box of pre-selected food.

On top of being more considerate, the farmers' market distribution style also aims to streamline the process. Boxing food in warehouses required a higher number of volunteers to maintain operations, as per Weatherby. Now that food is no longer boxed, a relatively smaller number of volunteers is needed. The

potential to waste food is also decreased, as clients can simply refuse foods they do not want. This allows the organization to gain insight into the consumers' food preferences and coordinate accordingly with partners to better fulfill demand.

Furthermore, Weatherby states that the farmers' market style is better for community building. Clients, especially the elderly, view distribution as a chance to talk and spend time with others. It also provides communities easier access to information about other resources, such as

California's food stamp program CalFresh, voter registration and housing assistance. These face-to-face interactions revive the social aspect of distributions.

"Aside from cost saving, we brought back client choice because we lost the social aspect of food distribution entirely. For years, many of our clients would arrive to stand in line well in advance of when they needed to. In many cases, this was because they enjoyed being able to talk to other people and meet with their friends," Weatherby said.

However, the switch has raised accessibility concerns for the disabled and elderly. To accommodate all clients, each site has designated volunteers that

"With the current drive-through model, we serve over 800 families each distribution. The transition to the farmers' market style will initially drive our capacity down as both our volunteers and clients adjust to the change, but with time, we will be able to support our regular clientele again. Other distribution sites that have already made the change, such as CalWORKS, experienced a dip, but rebounded within a month and now serve the same number of people at a fraction of the cost," Yang said.

Second Harvest's target is for all distribution sites to transition to the farmers' market style by the end of June 2025. The plan empowers clients with choice and catalyzes community interactions, all while working towards a future where no family goes hungry.

# Local Farmstead Faces Closure

ARIEL LEE STAFF WRITER

**T**he sun sets over the rolling hills of the Sakauye farm in North San Jose, shining brightly among the orchards. Yet this is likely one of the last times the golden light will illuminate clear land. In early July, the San Jose City Council decided to demolish the city's last Japanese-owned farmstead, a 23-acre fruit orchard owned by the Sakauye family, to create a mixed-use development. Yet there are many mixed opinions in the community over this decision: many

want to preserve the land full of Japanese culture, while others believe that it is necessary to create more living space.

The story of the Sakauye Farm began in 1920, when the farm was originally built. In 1952, the Pratt-Low Preserving Company bought the buildings in Santa Clara for Yuwakichi Sakauye and relocated them to his ranch on North First Street. Eiichi "Ed" Sakauye, Sakauye's eldest son, later took over the farm. During the 1950s and 1960s, most of the laborers were Mexican braceros, and the farm was one of the few that a person of Japanese descent owned in the Bay Area. After Sakauye's death in 2005, he was

succeeded by the Tsukadas, another Japanese family who tended to the land and have operated a fruit stand there for the past 40 years.

Despite the farm's impact, the San Jose City Council voted to turn the land into about 1,500 new apartment units and townhomes to accommodate for the housing crisis on July 10. The farm's demolition is expected to begin next February. However, San Jose is one of only three existing Japantowns in America. Community organizations such as the Preservation Action Council of San Jose are fighting to save the century-old farmhouse, emphasizing that it represents the towering contributions Japanese Americans made to the state's agricultural history. Locals believe this farm stands for the difficulties Japanese immigrants went through, especially due to the period during World War II when it was difficult for the Sakauyes to keep the land, according to the Japanese American Museum of San Jose Collection.

"Although homelessness is a huge issue in San Jose, tearing down the Sakauye farm would not make a significant difference in the housing crisis because homelessness comes from the lack of affordable housing, not the number of houses. The farm has a very significant historical meaning as it was one of the first Japanese-owned farmlands in America, so the city should preserve the land," Sophomore Apurva Tadimeti said.

Due to this support, members of the San Jose City Council have been debating setting the farm as the boundary of a future public park. However, this is not guaranteed, as it could require hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding.

"The city should split the land evenly to create housing while retaining its rich history. They could develop half the land and preserve the rest," Junior Varna Mouli said.

Despite all the efforts to preserve the culture of the farm, the Sakauye family believes that the land is not worth the preservation. They are

willing to sell their land to Hanover Company, a Houston-based developer, as they have expressed that they are proud of their father's accomplishments but are not fond of saving his former home. In fact, in 2005, Eiichi shared that he did not believe there would be any Japanese farmers in the future during an interview with the Japanese American Museum of San Jose Collection.

In essence, the local community holds very different views regarding the Sakauyes' land, as many want to preserve the land and its culture while others believe that housing comes first. With the consent of the Sakauyes, the options for change are minimal, as the government is set on creating a new housing development with the land.



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## OPINIONS

# Peeling Back the Green Facade

CATHERINE NGUYEN STAFF WRITER



**R**ows of green stickers line products on shelves, depicting everything from scenery to slogans to advertise their eco-friendly methods. However, peeling back the facade reveals something more manipulative behind these supposedly good intentions.

This phenomenon is known as greenwashing: misleading or false marketing strategies, permeating smoke and mirrors around genuine solutions to the ongoing climate crisis. Greenwashing sows distrust among consumers and detracts from companies that are genuinely trying to protect the environment.

The term "greenwashing" was originally coined by environmentalist Jay Westerveld

in 1986 when the hotel he was staying at asked to reuse the towels for the planet's sake, while that same hotel was expanding onto sensitive island ecosystems nearby. Greenwashing can be as blatant as downplaying carbon emissions, to more subtle strategies such as adding environmental buzzwords to products without legal weight.

For instance, in Volkswagen's infamous Dieselgate scandal, they were caught promoting so-called clean diesel cars by installing a device that would sense if it was undergoing an emissions test. This way, Volkswagen was able to hide the car's real emissions, which were 40 times more than allowed nitrogen oxide emissions in the US.

Companies also employ more subtle but equally dubious marketing practices, such as adding legally gray buzzwords that imply environmental benefits but actually offer none whatsoever. For instance, in 2019, H&M launched the "conscious" clothing line which was said to use "organic" cotton. However, these green terms did not have legal definitions to hold H&M accountable to their claims.

### SEPTEMBER CORRECTIONS

#### FRONT PAGE

"School Alumna's Olympic Debut"  
Missing writer credits  
for Mira Reddy

#### OPINIONS

"14minutes"  
Missing space

#### SCIENCE & TECH

"Stranded In Space"  
Shiny Xu incorrectly  
credited for infographic

JANE HONG ART

DESIGN BY CAITLYNN SUE

"I have seen green marketing such as '99% recycled paper' or '50% of our profits go back to the environment!' I am aware they are usually just jargon, but I generally prefer to take the chance that they are not and buy those products—unless they are expensive. I usually do not research if companies I buy from are eco-friendly or not, but I plan on doing so more in the future," Sophomore **Anjika Bansal** said.

In response to greenwashing, António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the UN, has created a committee to set clearer standards for net zero emission pledges. The committee's report includes ten recommendations to reach this standard, such as creating transition plans and increasing transparency. However, without any legal repercussions or tight restrictions on companies, this may not be enough to stop greenwashing.

"I usually do not go out of my way to purchase 'green'

products. What matters the most to me is the price or the brand name. When I do purchase an eco-friendly product, I merely see it as a bonus that I am doing something good for the environment and myself," Junior **Alex Kim** said.

Greenwashing undermines real efforts to address climate change—it makes consumers more likely to dismiss claims of products being environmentally friendly, regardless if they are true. Thus, greenwashing both hides irresponsible behavior and makes it difficult for truly sustainable brands to stand out on the shelf.

## Poll: Does the freedom to use phones during school benefit students more than it harms them?

COMPILED BY SRIHITA MADIRAJU AND NIRU SHIVAKUMAR STAFF WRITERS

112 STUDENTS POLLED

79%  
Yes

bypassed this Wi-Fi blocker simply by using data.

"I use my phone during breaks to quickly review for assessments and read new messages. Phone usage is completely normalized at the school and there are many academic reasons for using our phones, such as checking grade book updates and upcoming assignments," Sophomore **Aamir Lokhandwala** said.

California is not alone in targeting phone usage at a statewide level. For instance, Florida specifically targeted social media access by blocking it on the school's Wi-Fi. Although a well-meaning attempt to minimize distractions during school hours, students

"The phone pouches that some teachers use are a good idea to restrict students phone use during class time. But since the pouches are rarely checked, students are able to easily bypass them," Junior **Harry Yin** said.

Without strict supervision, the Phone-Free Schools Act bill is largely ineffective.

Schools remain better off with tailored approaches that fit the situation of their students and community.

## A Future Disconnected

JAMES TONG STAFF WRITER

**I**t is the first period of the day. In class, students are sneaking peeks at their phones under desks, waiting for the ping of a new message. Come 2026, students may have to say goodbye to this habit as California schools prepare for a major change—restricting phones from classrooms. No longer can students text a friend or log onto a mobile game to pass time in class. While the Phone-Free Schools Act is intended to reduce distractions at school, it will only result in students resorting to new ways of bypassing these rules. Instead, schools should implement incentive based systems that encourage students to keep their phones turned off.

the decision making ability for schools is eliminated. According to Gov. Newsom, this new bill is a form of strict standardization among California schools with a few exceptions including emergencies and individualized education plans.

With many students glued to their phones throughout each school day, it is clear why schools are tightening their phone policies. Excessive usage impacts students' mental health and increases the risk of cyberbullying. Furthermore, short-form content such as Instagram reels deteriorates students' attention spans, making learning and processing information far more difficult.



By July 1, 2026, every school within California will be mandated to adopt a policy limiting or prohibiting the use of phones during school hours. Efforts to restrict phones in the classroom by Gov. Gavin Newsom in 2019 only specified that school districts have the authority to regulate the use of phones during school hours—restrictions were not mandated. With Newsom's approval of the Phone-Free Schools Act,

however, phones also play a significant role in helping students both socially and academically. Social media, although often viewed in a negative light, allows students to connect. Since teachers primarily post assignments and announcements on Canvas, students also utilize phones to track important due dates through mobile Canvas. Phones are often far more convenient

JANE HONG ART

# PDA: Endearing or Embarrassing?

SRIHITA MADIRAJU STAFF WRITER

Navigating through the school hallways, simply trying to reach your next class and seeing couples everywhere holding hands, hugging and even kissing one another seems to be another reminder of how love seems to be in the air for everyone—except you. Despite the loneliness it can provoke, public displays of affection (PDA) are often acceptable to a point, yet anything overtly sexual should not be in public places like school. Although seemingly harmless to the couples themselves, most onlookers simply would rather go on about their day without witnessing a scene straight out of “The Notebook.” However, it is critical to note that many teenage couples that lack private spaces to express their affection have legitimate reasons behind their PDA: school can be their only opportunity to see each other.

“I see why students who do not have anywhere else to see each other and be intimate would rely on school for that, but I think they should still be more mindful because this is an educational setting and there should not be so many distractions.” Junior **Ava Fard** said.

Regardless, in most cases school should not be

considered a substitute for intimate settings. Educational environments reserved for their proper use and widespread inappropriate behavior in a learning environment can often contribute to distractions and decrease students’ quality of learning. Nobody wants to witness their classmates making out and feeling each other up on their way to class or while they look outside the window in Spanish

class; that should be reserved for behind closed doors.

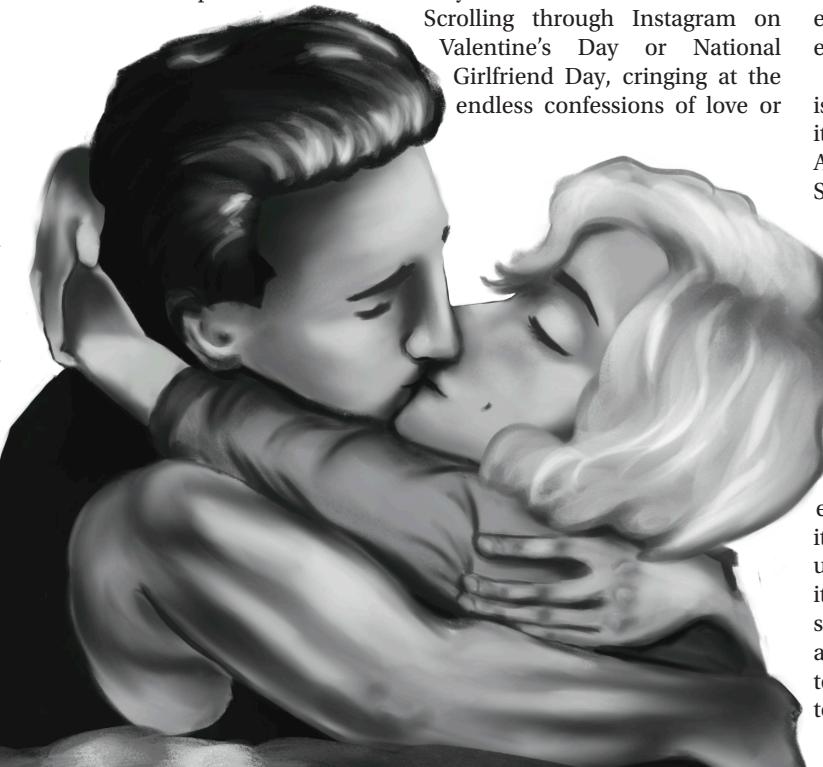
Social media can contribute to PDA, too, as couples post intimate content as a means of expressing their affection. Still, there are limits; this is a large difference between a sweet picture of a couple and an overtly sexual one. It should be taken into consideration as to who will be viewing one’s posts and if it may make viewers uncomfortable. Scrolling through Instagram on Valentine’s Day or National Girlfriend Day, cringing at the endless confessions of love or

paragraphs for one’s significant other, it almost makes users want to delete the app for the rest of the day.

Witnessing PDA can raise questions as to whether or not it is even legal. Although the school’s handbook does not clearly state whether or not PDA is allowed, according to the First Amendment everyone is given a right to express themselves. Acts of affection fall into the category of free expression, absent indecent exposure, of course.

“I have never had much of an issue with PDA since I am used to it as it is so normalized in Korea. At this point, I am unphased by it,” Senior **Seojoon Lee** said.

Students should be able to express themselves, but being mindful regardless of the rules set in stone around them is critical, and ultimately comes down to personal judgment. If someone is being overly touchy in front of an audience in school it is up to them to realize how uncomfortable it is for everyone around them. However, it is unfair to view PDA as entirely unbecoming or indecent because it all lies in the intensity and the surrounding context. If a display of affection is truly that bothersome to the viewer, the solution may be to simply look away.



**Poll: Has PDA made you uncomfortable in the past year?**

COMPILED BY MELVIN NAJARIAN AND JOSHUA YAN,  
STAFF WRITERS

**NO  
30.3%**

YUNSEO KIM ART

**YES  
69.7%**

## Sorry Buddy, There’s No Oxford Study

CAITLYNN SUE FRONT PAGE &amp; OPINIONS PAGE EDITOR

An Asian woman posts a TikTok of a day in her life while on vacation—going to the beach, trying new foods and enjoying a hike in the mountains. She is traveling with her white boyfriend who happens to be in the frame for a split second. The next day, the woman opens the comment section, expecting remarks on the lovely scenery or delicious food. Instead, she is instead met with a flood of comments: “OXFORD STUDY,” “stop getting colonized” and “another Asian woman falling for a mid white man.”

Her situation is one of many stemming from yet another disturbing TikTok trend—ridiculing Asian women for dating white men, exhibited by the belittling phrase “Oxford study.” This refers to the belief that there is a formal academic study published by Oxford University documenting the disproportionate attraction of Asian women to white men compared to other races, specifically the 2010 study “The New Suzie Wong: Normative Assumptions of White Male and Asian Female Relationships.” However, upon closer examination (merely reading the first sentence of the study’s abstract), one discovers that the study has absolutely nothing to do with real-life relationships between Asian women and white men. Rather it examines those portrayed in television advertisements.

One of the study’s authors spoke out against its recent online attention, explaining that the study is being misinterpreted

and is not relevant to modern relationships. Yet, this has done little to stop social media users from using “Oxford study” comments to scorn and stereotype the personal lives of Asian women. These social media users do not care for truthfulness—they deliberately search for any information that can be twisted to support their attacks.

The men who continue to reference the ‘Oxford study’ are just resentful due to their own lack of dating success. Asian women dating white men is not a big deal. These men are simply irritated that these Asian women are not attracted to them,” Junior **Anya Shah** said.

The “Oxford study” comments reveal the extent of misogynistic prejudices, particularly within online Men’s Rights Asian (MRAAsian) groups. Many leaving “Oxford study” comments are MRAAsian men who claim Asian women should be “first dibs” for them. This seems to be a response to their own insecurity in the dating realm: in Western society, Asian men are generally viewed as less attractive due to emasculating portrayals of them in media.

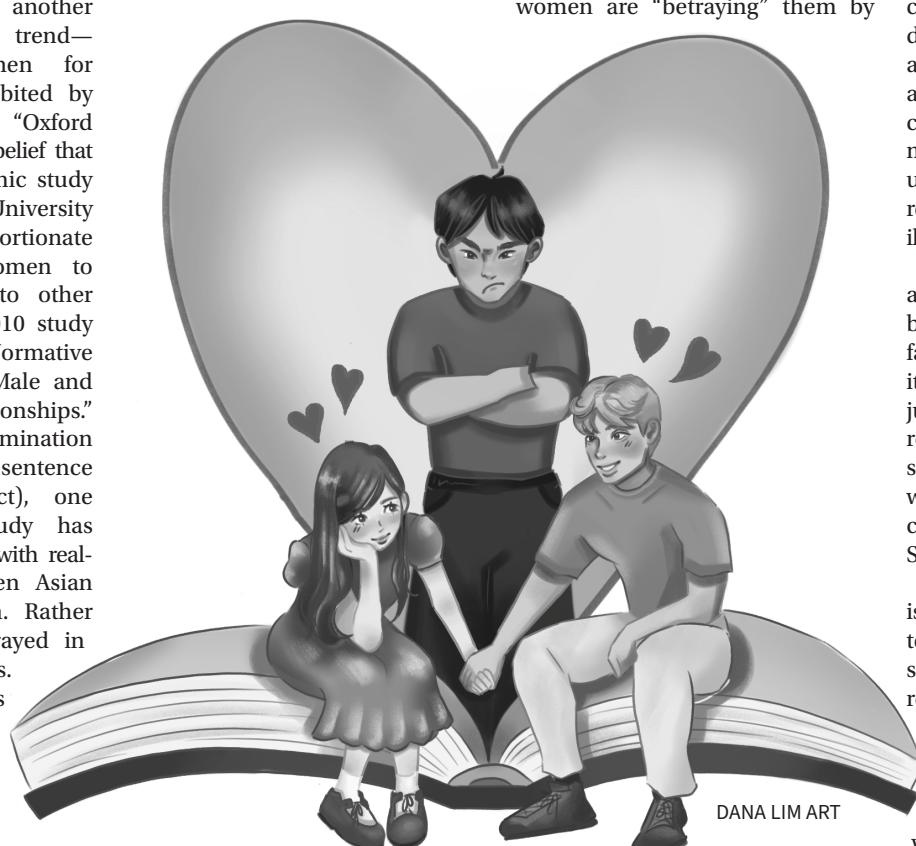
In the eyes of many MRAAsians, Asian women are the prize in their patriarchal competition with other men, leading to their bigoted beliefs that Asian women are “betraying” them by

choosing to date white men. This follows the deranged pattern of men throughout history viewing women as objects that can be “theirs” rather than human beings who can make their own relationship choices.

In addition, MRAAsians insist that an Asian woman’s choice to date a white man reflects anti-Asian attitudes and a compliance to white supremacy as they believe Asian women are foolishly catering to hypersexualized Western fetishes of Asian women. It is an extreme overgeneralization to assume internalized racism behind every interracial relationship involving a white man. Numerous factors contribute to someone’s unique dating preferences and it is never anyone else’s business to judge who a person chooses to date—especially complete strangers on social media. The audacity of social media users to simplify a woman’s entire relationship journey to two words is illogical and insensitive.

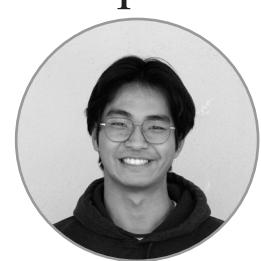
“On social media, people are often more judgemental because of the lack of face-to-face confrontation. Regardless, it is wrong to make immediate judgments on the nature of a relationship seen on social media since it is such a small snippet of what is otherwise a much more complex and layered connection,” Senior **Quynh Do** said.

Ultimately, “Oxford study” is a toxic and counterproductive term that reduces Asian women to stereotypes while worsening the reputation of Asian men. No one should be judged for harmless dating preferences. It is time to move beyond immature assumptions and treat everyone with more empathy.



DANA LIM ART

## “Requiem”



JAMES YU SPORTS EDITOR

With the start of the school year and the stacks upon stacks of homework which that entails, I find myself with increasingly less time to question the deeper meaning behind each and every thing that I do. Luckily, Keshi’s newest album “Requiem” explores the meaning behind many of life’s greatest tribulations. Although the album’s themes at times can be repetitive, “Requiem” is an insightful listen which conveys intriguing commentary on life while also being easy on the ears.

Keshi opens the project with “Amen,” a song accurately titled for its ethereal, angelic backing vocals. Its lyrics set the tone for the album, evoking the singer’s desperation to find heavenly meaning in life amongst hellish challenges: a recurring motif throughout the rest of the record.

Shifting the beat to a more rhythmic tempo, “Say” explores the pains behind unrequited love while retaining Keshi’s blissful and elegant vocals. “The song’s groovy instrumental and snazzy pace compliment Keshi’s singing well, culminating into a cohesive yet layered tune.

Similarly to “Say,” the following song “Night” doubles down on the rhythmic beats through syncopated percussion and 808s. As Keshi pleads to be emancipated from terrors which haunt him in the night, his singing turns visceral and desperate, contrasting well with the resolute and booming 808s.

Despite many of my peers’ profound admiration for “Soft Spot,” which follows “Night” on the tracklist, the song’s affectionate lyrics feel out of place in between the desperation of “Night” and the uplifting mood shift of “Like That.” On “Soft Spot,” Keshi reflects on his conflicted feelings for his partner, presenting her love as warm and irreplaceable. However, the somber vibe of the song conflicts with the passionate themes of the surrounding songs, resulting in “Soft Spot” rubbing off as a lukewarm ballad when heard after “Night.”

Skipping to the track “War,” Keshi restrains a rising tension from the beat and piano through an earnest serenade before releasing the reigns and letting the mounting instrumental crash like a wave throughout the chorus, where Keshi sings about the fruitless battle waged between him and his lover.

The soul Keshi embeds within each song makes it impossible to address every song on the album without abridging its true message. Keshi’s deep album requires a thorough listen to fully comprehend and appreciate the themes he presents. I recommend listeners to hear for themselves how the melodies of each song off of “Requiem” speak to their own lives.

was I vibin’?

(4/5)

- + deep, meaningful themes
- + visceral vocals
- conflicting emotions

## "How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies"



WINSTON CHU STAFF WRITER

While scrolling through TikTok a few weeks ago, I was immediately captivated by a movie trailer on my feed, boasting the flashy title "How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies." After I decided to watch the film, I learned that beneath its shocking title lies heartfelt commentary on human nature, family and time.

Set in the lush greenery of Thailand, "How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies" explores the dynamics of a typical three-generation family. Although the film is spoken in Thai and dubbed in English, the well-developed characters and simple premise make it easy to understand. The story follows M, a young adult who coasts through life—doom scrolling by day and live streaming video games by night—while his mom works tirelessly to cover for his expenses. Grandma resides alone in her small house, living a seemingly repetitive existence by performing the same daily tasks, such as cooking fish and watering her plants.

Their simple routines are shattered by devastating news: Grandma has developed stage four colon cancer. However, M sees Grandma's death as a golden opportunity to inherit her money and quickly grow rich. Consequently, he moves in with her in order to win her favor.

As M spends more time with Grandma, his ulterior motives shift to genuine love; he realizes that the little everyday activities—helping her sell street food and walking her to the bank—are what truly count. As I watched their relationship rekindle, I was reminded of the importance of spending quality time with my loved ones.

The movie also emphasizes notions of understanding and respect between families. M uncovers Grandma's struggles, successes and sacrifice during their time together. As they learn more about each other, the audience learns how we will never understand the complexity of each other's lives unless we are willing to peel back the layers; everyone carries untold stories that can only be shared when we take the time to connect.

This film is more than just a heartwarming tale. It serves as a reminder for viewers to bond with those we truly value in our lives, especially when time seems to fly by. We might not make millions, but the cost of connections is priceless.

### showstopper or snoozefest?

(5/5)

- well developed characters
- bittersweet storyline
- insightful life lessons

DESIGN BY ANNA YUE

## Ticketmaster or Puppetmaster?

AMIE AHN STAFF WRITER

CAITLYNN SUE ART

A Taylor Swift fan anxiously maneuvers through the Ticketmaster website, deftly selecting their seats. As they proceed to the check-out page, their heartbeat drops to their stomach as their eyes adjust to a frozen blank screen. Nothing can fix the website crash—once it reloads, all progress is lost, and all tickets are sold out. These site crashes, along with excessive fees and dynamic pricing, have become a common occurrence on American ticket sales company Ticketmaster. Regardless of these negative customer experiences, the company continues to hold a monopoly over the concert ticket industry.

Ticketmaster was founded in 1976 as a ticketing hardware seller, but it switched to computerized ticketing by 1985. In 2009, the company merged with Live Nation, an entertainment company. Over decades, Ticketmaster began securing exclusive ticketing contracts with the majority of concert venues in the United States.

Regardless of the company's power and influence,

Ticketmaster is infamous among concert goers and musicians. One source of dislike stems from the high service, processing, delivery and facility fees that are added to the ticket prices. The company states that part of these fees go toward helping their clients and covering the cost of hosting the concert itself. However, the full ticket price including fees can only be seen on the final check out page, causing significant inflations.

"Overpriced fees are my biggest complaint about Ticketmaster, as they can cost as much as half of the actual ticket price. To make changes to these fee policies, concertgoers could try to avoid buying upcharged Platinum tickets and even organize small-scale boycotts," Sophomore Jessamine Sloan said.

Additionally, Ticketmaster's dynamic pricing policy—the act of adjusting prices in response to changes in demand—raised further complaints in 2022. As stated by the British Broadcasting Corporation, many concertgoers

claim that dynamic pricing mostly benefits Ticketmaster rather than the artists themselves. For example, longtime fans of American rock singer Bruce Springsteen were infuriated after tickets for the first tour he was holding in six years cost up to \$4,000. Similarly, as reported by NPR, many Taylor Swift fans were unable to score tickets to her "Era's" tour because of long waitlists, website crashes and constantly fluctuating prices on Ticketmaster's website. Subsequently, Swift fan Michelle Sterioff sued Ticketmaster's parent company Live Nation. However, in December 2023, Sterioff's case was dismissed. The true motive behind her sudden act is not verified, but Billboard had disclosed in August 2023 that she was discussing an agreed settlement with Ticketmaster.

Scalping, or ticket resale, is another substantial issue that many users claim Ticketmaster fails to manage. Scalpers purchase tickets to resell them at a much greater price when the demand is higher; many use Ticketmaster's verified resale system to resell tickets within the

company's website. These resale prices are prone to being highly exaggerated; artists such as rock band Pearl Jam have requested Ticketmaster to limit all resale prices to face value—called Fan-to-Fan Face Value Exchange—as stated by Patch News. However, Ticketmaster does not voluntarily establish these restrictions, because resale fees are an additional source of profit.

In order to avoid the many problems of acquiring tickets on Ticketmaster, fans often use alternative websites—Independent third-party websites—such as StubHub.

"Once, I used SeatGeek to buy my tickets, but I still prefer to use Ticketmaster for non-resale tickets because I can get them for face value. Nonetheless, for many bigger artists, Ticketmaster tickets are often sold out in the presales and scalpers are not handled well," Junior Brianna Le said.

Despite the central position Ticketmaster occupies in the realm of musical artists, fans and concerts, the company faces many complaints from consumers. However, its monopolistic grip seems to be holding for the time being.

## The Truth Behind True Crime

ANDREW XIE AND ISABELLA ZHU STAFF WRITERS

HELEN RUAN ART

### Quotebox: Student opinions on true crime

COMPILED BY MIRA REDDY STAFF WRITER

"This is a true story." These are the first words displayed in a bright red font over a pitch-black background, opening one of the biggest breakout shows of the year. Based on the real-life experiences of creator Richard Gadd, the seven-episode limited Netflix series "Baby Reindeer" has won six Emmy Awards since its release in April.

The show follows Donny—an aspiring comedian played by Gadd—as he is shadowed by a serial stalker named Martha who mistakes his courtesy as affection. As her pursuits become increasingly relentless, his life spirals out of control. While Gadd has dramatized the show for entertainment, portraying real people and events comes with consequences.

Although "Baby Reindeer" does not explicitly reveal the inspiration behind Martha's character, online sleuths quickly identified Fiona Harvey, as Martha's real-life reference. Harvey claims she has endured anxiety, depression and a fear of leaving her home since the show's release; on June 6, she sued Netflix for defamation. It was ruled on Sept. 27 that Harvey could proceed with her lawsuit based on the assertion that the show's creators exaggerated key events. In Baby Reindeer, Martha stalks a police officer, sexually assaults Donny, violently attacks him and eventually serves five years in prison. The judge noted that none of these details were true, yet fans have varying reactions to the case.

If Harvey was fired or denied a job due to the documentary, she could have sued for

wrongful termination. By suing Netflix for defamation, it seems to justify the rumors against her and paint her in a darker light," Freshman Sayuri Lokeshwar said.

Since the court hearing, Gaad has stood up for Harvey, mentioning in his court filing that his intentions were not to hurt her, but rather to tell a story that reflected his emotions. However, Lyrissa Lidsky, a law professor at the University of Florida, cautioned that if something is labeled as a true story, it must be factually accurate; deviations from reality can confuse the audience.

"I was surprised that the major plot points were heavily dramatized, as the show feels raw and gives off the impression that the creator truly experienced every event firsthand. I understand how it would be difficult for viewers to not take everything at face value," Junior Niels Park said.

The true crime series "Monsters" released in September following the case of the Menendez brothers also sparked controversy regarding accuracy. Erik Menendez criticized the show in a statement posted on X by his wife, asserting it perpetuated a misleading portrayal of him and his brother. Recent surfacing of evidence for sexual abuse have led online personas and celebrities such as Kim Kardashian and Cooper Koch to advocate for the brothers' freedom. For example, Kardashian published a letter on

"True crime content is often made without the consent of criminals, victims or their families, allowing random people to direct hatred toward them."

Junior Arianna Rashid

A lack of truth in true crime may attract people to the genre. A 2018 study published by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of South Carolina stated that almost 90 percent of true crime podcast listeners ease boredom and entertain themselves with true crime content instead of resonating with the story on a personal level. Another YouGov survey from this year found that Americans' primary motivations for true crime consumption tended to be an interest in mystery, psychology and entertainment.

"True crime films can get facts wrong, making the already sensitive experience even more intrusive."

Freshman Evangeline Zhao

Celebrity and social media support allowed the brothers to schedule another court hearing on Dec. 11, giving them the chance to leave their lifelong imprisonment.

DESIGN BY ANNA YUE

## Sizing Up Vanity Sizing

LAUREN LAW AND CHELSEA LU STAFF WRITERS

Piles of jeans are scattered across the dressing room floor, each one boasting a different size label—yet somehow, all of them fit the same. In the bewildering world of vanity sizing, the fashion practice of assigning smaller labels to inflated clothing sizes, one can feel as if they have stepped into a carnival mirror that has shrunk and distorted their body.

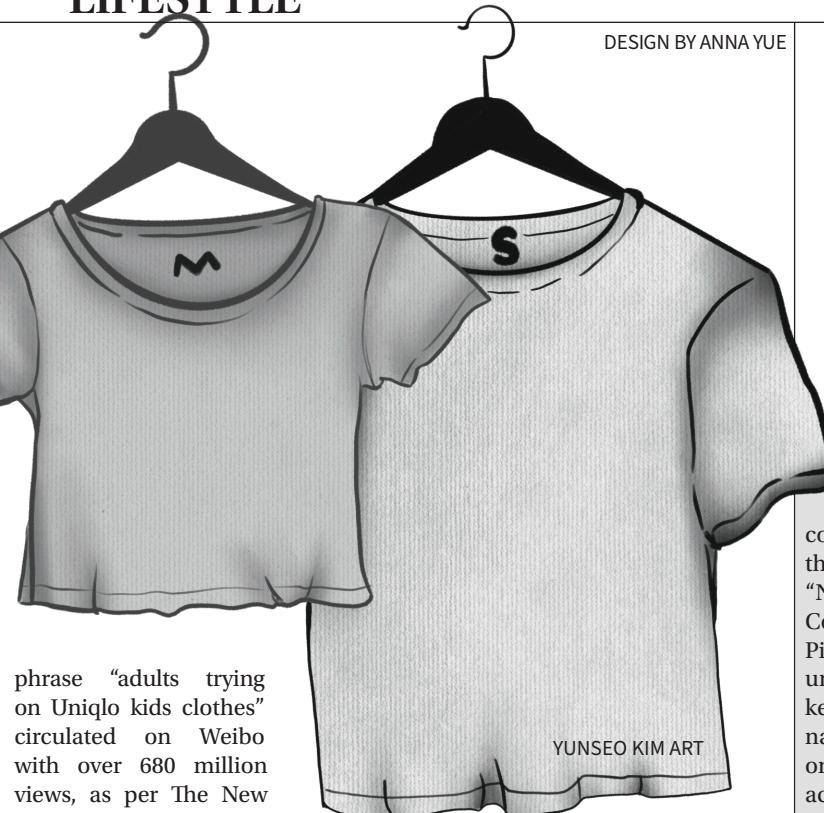
Many brands started using vanity sizing to boost their consumers' self-esteem and overall fondness for products, as it appeals to customers' self-admiration by presenting a facade of being smaller. The smallest size available in the 1950's was a size eight, whereas today, it has dropped to a size zero, as per Time Magazine. Ironically, as the average body size expanded over the years, clothing tag size paradoxically shrank. This allows people with larger builds to fit into smaller sizes, while petite individuals find it increasingly harder to purchase clothes.

Brandy Melville, a popular Italian fast fashion line, adopted a system of selling only one size to create a specific aesthetic targeted at young women and to reduce production costs. Notoriously known for only catering towards slim figures, the brand has faced controversy for incentivizing weight loss and body shaming. However, smaller women stood their ground that it is fair for Brandy Melville to mainly produce smaller clothes, as companies like Torrid only carry sizes for plus sized women.

The documentary "Brandy Hellville and the Cult of Fast Fashion," released by HBO on April 9 exposed issues of misconduct, a toxic work environment and fatphobia within the brand. In spite of the negative stigma surrounding their practice, Brandy Melville continued their one size standard. However, Brandy Melville reportedly increased their one size to be more inclusive as customers pointed out noticeable size inflation, according to an article from In the Know, a subsection of Yahoo.

"Vanity sizing is just a poor attempt at fixing an issue that brands created themselves—valuing a specific body type over others. If companies really tried working on inclusivity, there would not be a need for vanity sizing," Sophomore Alexa Liu said.

Ironically, while Western shoppers have been quick to criticize the saying "One Size Fits Most," the East has excitedly welcomed this fashion style. In China, where the societal pressure to view thinness as a currency of attractiveness is ubiquitous, a sub-style of Brandy Melville nicknamed "BM style" emerged, influencing young women to embrace tight and cropped fitting items to show off their slim figure. The hashtag for BM racked up over 37.44 million views on the microblogging app Weibo, as reported by Dao Insights. As yet another way to boast thinness, the



DESIGN BY ANNA YUE

phrase "adults trying on Uniqlo kids clothes" circulated on Weibo with over 680 million views, as per The New York Times.

At its core, unrealistic beauty standards from social media and the pressure to conform to a certain physical ideal has plagued the lives of women, fueling vanity sizing and other outrageous trends, per the American Psychological Association. Fashion Law Journal adds that clothing brands and fashion often worsen body image and one's confidence in their weight, outlining the complex relationship between societal standards, fashion branding and individual body image perceptions.

"It is considered the norm to be a size zero or two, and girls who do not fit these slim requirements are devalued. These stereotypes are too outdated, and we must push back by building a

positive sentiment around accepting and appreciating all different types of appearances to ensure that everyone feels confident and valued," Freshman Aliyah Castillo said.

Although vanity sizing can uplift some customers' confidence, it causes smaller women to lose sizes specific to their body type. As sizes continue to increase while maintaining the same labels, larger sizes start to see more diversity whereas smaller sizes are short ended. In essence, the social pressure to appeal to customers has transformed the measurements in many stores, leaving many shoppers deceptively thinking they fit a smaller size, while others hunt for clothes that fit.

## "Nano"



CLAIRE CHANG INVESTIGATIVE REPORT EDITOR

Under heavy security measures, the scientists at the nanotechnology company work tirelessly to push the horizons of nanoscience in "Nano," a fictional piece by Robin Cook. When the central character Pia Grazdani fools security, she unlocks the company's best well-kept secret: the testing of blue nanorobots called respirocytes on human subjects in restricted-access labs.

The company tests respirocytes' efficiency to enhance professional cyclists' athletic performance. They are designed to mimic human blood cells, and the company had scrambled to see its significance in the future of medical treatment. When Pia came across a collapsed cyclist, she demanded a proper medical examination, but instead her company's security guards suspiciously swooped the cyclist away. The suspense drew me in, and my desire to unearth the company's underlying motives kept me hooked.

Pia exemplifies the epitome of how curiosity killed the cat, as her heightened suspicion and investigations of the company's motives, only lead her into a more entangled relationship with Berman, her CEO. Although Berman is frustrated at Pia for putting four years of his work in danger, he still flirts with the idea of keeping her around for his own gain. I was immediately disappointed when the plot opened with unrequited love, but I was pleased to see how Cook explores the ethical gray zones of corporate power where loyalty may easily become fragile and compromised. While "Nano" is a scientific thriller, Cook fuses recent advancements with fiction to critique the lengths corporations will go to profit off of new technology, especially at the expense of human lives.

As I followed Pia through her persistent investigation, I was sometimes overwhelmed by the plot's intensity because of the company's rush to hide their unethical practices, and I was quite concerned for Pia's safety. Nonetheless, the thrill of it all kept me on my toes. "Nano" is impressively thought-provoking, as it highlights societal anxieties about rapid technological advancement. It truly urges us to face uncomfortable truths of the limits of ambition and to reflect on the consequences of valuing profit over human welfare.

My AP Biology teacher initially recommended this author to me. Now, after reading "Nano," I am excited to tell her all about the moral conundrum it poses.

## book hooked?

(4/5)

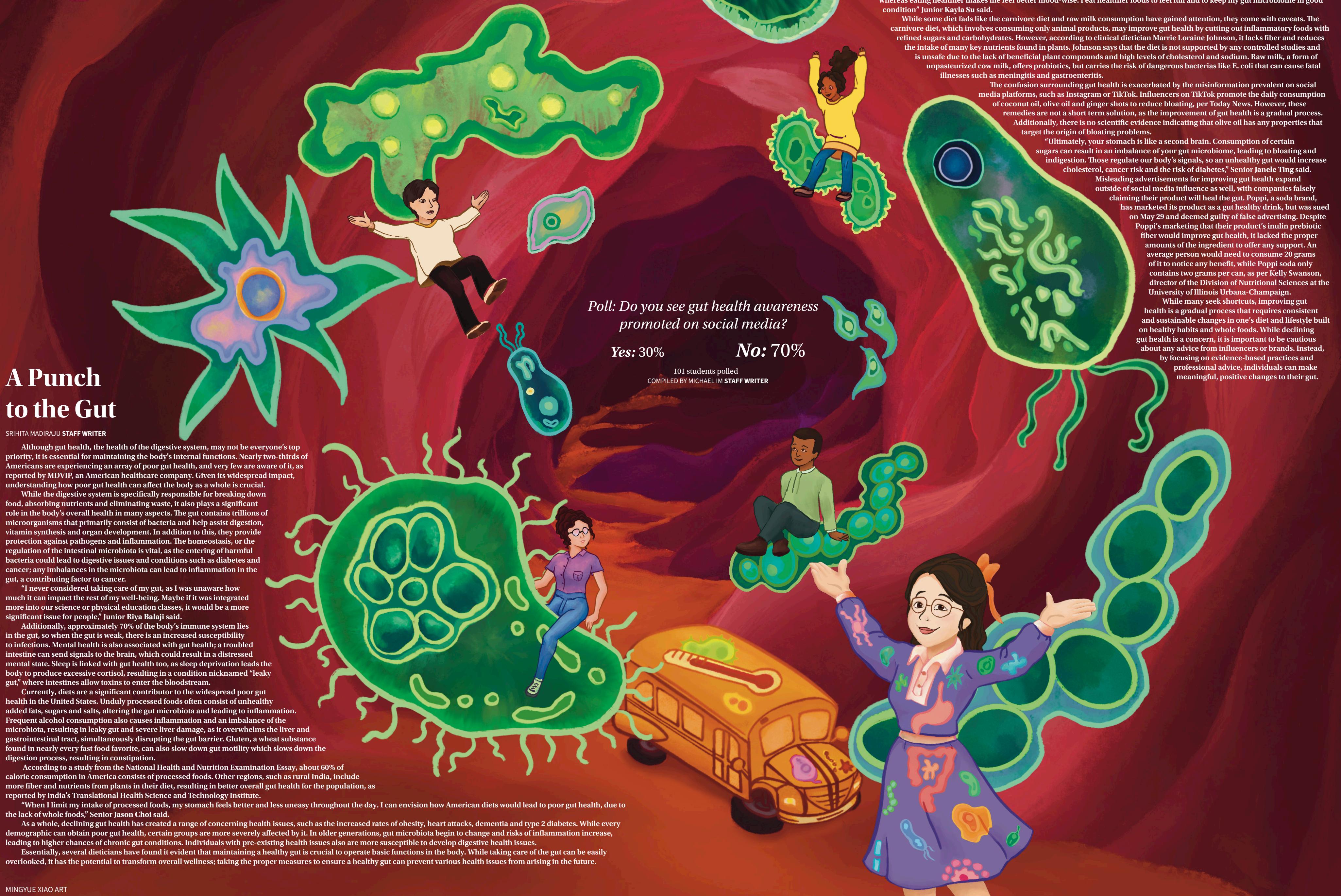


- + significant social implications
- some graphic scenes
- rushed ending



YUNSEO KIM ART

# GUT HEALTH



## The Key to a Good Gut Feeling

MIRA REDDY STAFF WRITER AND TERESA SUN STAFF WRITER

The saying "trust your gut" is backed by science—there are hundreds of millions of neurons in the gut that make up the enteric nervous system, or the "second brain," meaning that the gut can influence emotions and decisions. Naturally, this influences many individuals to care for their gut to ensure it has a positive influence on the rest of their body. However, despite their genuine concerns, many people are fooled by internet trends and misinformation, which could do more harm than good to their gut.

Improving gut health starts with a diet rich in whole, or unprocessed foods—such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes. These foods provide essential nutrients and plenty of fiber, crucial for fueling beneficial gut bacteria and regulating bowel movements. Fermented foods help aid gut health by lessening inflammation in the gut microbiome, according to dietitian Natalie Rizzo. Avoiding sweeteners or artificial flavorings, and switching from processed to probiotic-rich whole foods are also backed by dieticians.

"Your health, mood and energy are a reflection of what you eat. Eating too many sweets causes me to get sugar crashes, whereas eating healthier makes me feel better mood-wise. I eat healthier foods to feel full and to keep my gut microbiome in good condition" Junior Kayla Su said.

While some diet fads like the carnivore diet and raw milk consumption have gained attention, they come with caveats. The carnivore diet, which involves consuming only animal products, may improve gut health by cutting out inflammatory foods with refined sugars and carbohydrates. However, according to clinical dietitian Marrie Loraine Johnson, it lacks fiber and reduces the intake of many key nutrients found in plants. Johnson says that the diet is not supported by any controlled studies and is unsafe due to the lack of beneficial plant compounds and high levels of cholesterol and sodium. Raw milk, a form of unpasteurized cow milk, offers probiotics, but carries the risk of dangerous bacteria like E. coli that can cause fatal illnesses such as meningitis and gastroenteritis.

The confusion surrounding gut health is exacerbated by the misinformation prevalent on social media platforms, such as Instagram or TikTok. Influencers on TikTok promote the daily consumption of coconut oil, olive oil and ginger shots to reduce bloating, per Today News. However, these remedies are not a short term solution, as the improvement of gut health is a gradual process.

Additionally, there is no scientific evidence indicating that olive oil has any properties that target the origin of bloating problems.

"Ultimately, your stomach is like a second brain. Consumption of certain sugars can result in an imbalance of your gut microbiome, leading to bloating and indigestion. Those regulate our body's signals, so an unhealthy gut would increase cholesterol, cancer risk and the risk of diabetes," Senior Janele Ting said.

Misleading advertisements for improving gut health expand outside of social media influence as well, with companies falsely claiming their product will heal the gut. Poppi, a soda brand, has marketed its product as a gut healthy drink, but was sued on May 29 and deemed guilty of false advertising. Despite Poppi's marketing that their product's inulin prebiotic fiber would improve gut health, it lacked the proper amounts of the ingredient to offer any support. An average person would need to consume 20 grams of it to notice any benefit, while Poppi soda only contains two grams per can, as per Kelly Swanson, director of the Division of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

While many seek shortcuts, improving gut health is a gradual process that requires consistent and sustainable changes in one's diet and lifestyle built on healthy habits and whole foods. While declining gut health is a concern, it is important to be cautious about any advice from influencers or brands. Instead, by focusing on evidence-based practices and professional advice, individuals can make meaningful, positive changes to their gut.

**Poll: Do you see gut health awareness promoted on social media?**

**Yes: 30%**

**No: 70%**

101 students polled  
COMPILED BY MICHAEL IM STAFF WRITER

# ELECTION 2024

MELVIN NAJARAN AND CHELSEA LU STAFF WRITERS

*Continued from Front Page:*

The president-elect gained with both Latino and Black voters, especially among young men, and made small gains from women as well. He also managed to successfully rally his traditional voters: rural white men. Though final counting is expected to continue until mid to late November, Trump is expected to win the popular vote by around 3 million votes, becoming the first Republican candidate to do so since George W. Bush in 2004.

The 2024 election season began almost 2 years ago. On Nov. 15, 2022, former president Donald Trump announced his 2024 presidential campaign in a speech at his Mar-a-Lago estate. Among the first to declare his candidacy for the Republican party, Trump began the bid without his former vice president Mike Pence after their split over the events of Jan. 6. On the Democratic Party's side, most support was behind President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, who officially announced their reelection campaign in 2021.

Along with Trump, prominent figures such as Florida governor Ron DeSantis and former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley entered the race for the Republican nomination, but quickly suspended their campaigns after losing to Trump by large margins in the primaries.

During his campaign, Trump was also battling multiple court cases for both fraud and election interference. As the first former president to have been charged with federal crimes, he was indicted four times between March to August of 2023. Trump was later found guilty in a New York civil case of 34 counts of falsifying business documents to cover up hush money.

Trump and Biden's campaigns each focused on issues such as abortion, immigration and inflation, all discussed in the presidential debate. However, during the debate, it became clear that Biden's greatest vulnerability, his age, was catching up to him. With slurred sentences and unclear thoughts, his performance was often incoherent and did not respond to Trump's claims. According to polls by FiveThirtyEight, most believed Biden had lost the debate,

largely as a result of his age. A month later, Biden announced his departure from the election after his favorability polls slid. In his resignation letter, he endorsed Harris as the presidential nominee for the Democratic Party.

On July 13, a few weeks after the debate, Trump was the target of an attempted assassination at his rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. The hailstorm of bullets narrowly missed, with only Trump's ear grazed, but an attendee in the crowd was fatally wounded and two others were critically injured. The shooter, identified as 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks, was quickly shot and killed by the Secret Service. Soon after, on Sept. 15, a shooter was caught on the grounds of Trump's golf course in West Palm Beach, Florida. Identified as Ryan Wesley Routh, he was spotted pointing a rifle behind shrubbery. These assassination attempts were a stark reminder of the threat of political violence, and both Biden and Harris condemned the attacks.

Soon after the attempted assassination, JD Vance, Ohio senator and Yale Law School graduate, was picked as Trump's vice-presidential candidate. Vance, who had been gaining steam in the Republican Party despite his initial opposition to Trump in 2016, had become famous for his memoir "Hillbilly Elegy," which described his impoverished upbringing in Middletown, Ohio, and had also become infamous for a misinterpreted community note on X on July 15 which falsely suggested that he had had sexual relations with a couch.

On Aug. 6, Minnesota governor Tim Walz was

announced as Harris's running mate. Walz's position as a former high school teacher and football coach added relatability to Harris's campaign. Chosen because of his appeal to white suburban voters, Harris believed that Walz would bring home the "Blue Wall" states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Harris promised federal protection of abortion, expanded child tax credits, caps on drug prices and the continuation of Biden-era investments. In her Sept. 10 debate with Trump, she performed well; voters found she appeared well-prepared and collected, in contrast with Trump, who spoke more aggressively and often rambled. However, the two remained vague about their proposed policies; nonetheless, polls done by the New York Times showed that most viewers believed Harris performed better than Trump.

In the following months, Harris's campaign raised far more funds than Trump's. According to CNN, the Democratic National Committee raised about \$236 million compared to the \$135 million raised by the Republican National Committee. While Trump's rally assassination attempt and his multiple court convictions had brought in more money, the Democratic campaign ultimately outpaced the Republican effort in fundraising regardless. The ultra-wealthy played an instrumental role as well, with Jeff Bezos blocking a direct endorsement of Harris from the Washington Post, Elon Musk donating millions to Trump's campaign through his



LYN KANG ART

America PAC, and many tech company executives, most notably Google's leaders, donating millions to Harris's campaign.

The vice presidential debate took place on Oct. 2 between Walz and Vance, offering voters a view of the different visions that the two candidates had for the nation. This debate also illuminated a rare moment in modern American politics, as both candidates approached the debate in a civil manner, without name calling and often coming to agreement on issues facing the nation. Among voters, both candidates were able to improve their public favorability. Vance, who had a net negative approval rating prior to the debate, gained a slight positive rating swing afterward.

Trump decided to go on Joe Rogan's podcast, "The Joe Rogan Experience" on Oct. 25. During the three-hour-long podcast, Trump said that he made a mistake in selecting people for his cabinet, and that he would prioritize loyalty in his next presidency. During the podcast, Trump confirmed that he would be open to bringing Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the Independent presidential candidate who dropped out of the race to support Trump, into his administration. In a later episode with Trump ally Elon Musk, Joe Rogan officially endorsed Trump. Harris was also offered a seat with Rogan, but Rogan refused following the Harris campaign's demands of an unconventional one-hour podcast in a spot more convenient for Harris than Joe Rogan's studio in Austin.

"Trump's win can be surprising for people who are well off and have the security to worry about social issues or Trump's character. But for most Americans struggling with their day-to-day lives, Trump's emphasis on putting America first and dealing with high costs and crime was more important and spoke directly to their needs while Harris seemed to ignore them," Senior Levin Gong said.

Harris also received large outpourings of support from mainstream celebrities, including Taylor Swift and Beyoncé, whom she hoped would rally the youth vote. Still, Harris continued to receive backlash for her lack of public showings outside of limited rallies.

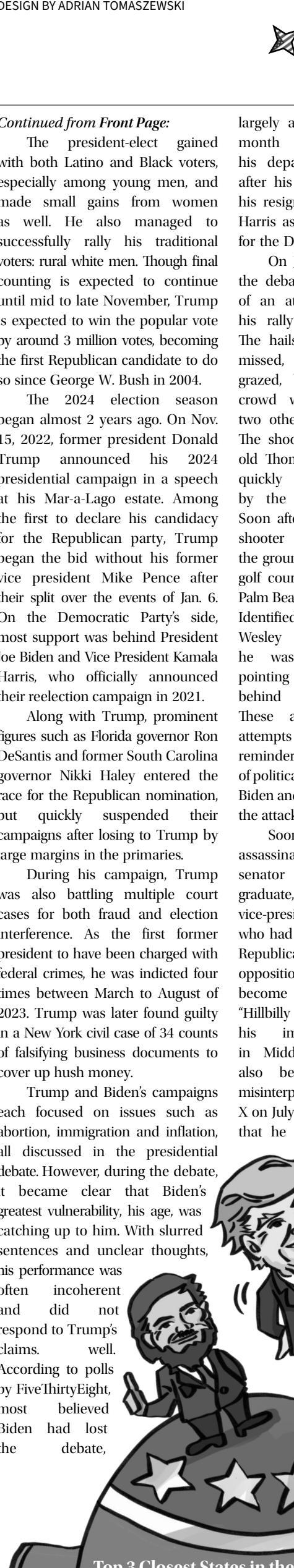
In the final days of October, following an incident in which a

comedian at a Trump rally remarked that Puerto Rico was a "floating island of garbage," President Joe Biden made remarks to a progressive Latino group that suggested Trump supporters were "garbage." In return, Trump spent the next day as a passenger in a garbage truck while dressed in a garbageman uniform.

When Election Day came, the first domino to fall for Trump was the state of Florida, whose massive Cuban population and influx of retirees continued to shift the state right, giving Trump a 13% margin in the state. The state went for Trump by under 2% in 2016. The next important states to fall were Texas, which swung 9% to the right, largely from an increased Latino vote, then Georgia and North Carolina, both of which swung by 2% largely from a combination of decreased Black turnout, an increased Black male vote for Trump, and a higher rural turnout for Trump. These demographic trends continued throughout the night, scoring Trump the Rust Belt, whose states all went by over 0.8% for Trump, becoming the best result for a Republican in the region since George H.W. Bush in 1988 and outperforming Trump's own surprise victory in 2016. Once Pennsylvania was called for Trump, with an eventual lead of 312 electoral votes to Harris's 226, Trump was announced as the election's victor.

"It was very sad for me to see the outcome of the election, as well as the voter turnout numbers. Many people who will be affected most by the president-elect's policies still proceeded to vote for him. The right to vote is a privilege—and the privilege was not used by many. The election results clearly show that single-issue voters played a large part, with many ignoring the overall message from their chosen candidate," Anu Sarkar, Science Department, said.

The day after, Harris delivered her concession speech, admitting defeat under a fair election. She congratulated President-elect Trump on his win, contrasting with Trump's 2020 defeat, which he disputes to this day. Whether Trump will be able to enact the policy changes he wants largely depends on whether he effectively utilizes his control over Congress, but what is certain is that his impact will be felt for decades on.



## Top 3 Closest States in the U.S. Presidential Election:

1. **Wisconsin:** 29,367 votes, 0.9%, Trump victory

2. **Michigan:** 81,596 votes, 1.4%, Trump victory

3. **Pennsylvania:** 145,036 votes, 2.1%, Trump victory

COMPILED BY ANDREW XIE  
STAFF WRITER

LYN KANG ART

# Dissanyakenomics and Politics

MELVIN NAJARIAN STAFF WRITER

The round second of Sri Lanka's presidential election ended with the country's first third party victory ever, as Anura Kumara Dissanayake, a Marxist politician, won with a plurality of votes. This marks the first time in Sri Lanka's history where no candidate won a majority of votes, as Sajith Premadasa, the opposition leader, won 32.76% of the votes, while Dissanayake received 42.31% of the votes as part of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). Also known as the People's Liberation Front, it is a leftist political party and former revolutionary movement. This election arrived at a pivotal moment, as the nation was experiencing an economic crisis in the wake of mass protests in 2022 that ousted the former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

The recently elected president has been politically active since his youth. While studying in college, Dissanayake took part in student protests against a peace accord signed with India that aimed to offer some autonomy to the

Tamil population in Sri Lanka in a bid to end the Sri Lankan Civil War. During his university years, he joined the Socialist Students Union, which was part of the JVP. After the party was outlawed by the Sri Lanka government, the JVP began an armed uprising in 1987. This sought to challenge the government and oppose the deal reached with India which would have divided the island. As the government violently crushed the uprising, Dissanayake went into hiding—the JVP's leader and almost all high ranking party members were killed. However, Dissanayake reemerged in 1992, beginning to lead the Socialist Students Union as part of the reconstructed JVP. JVP later re-entered Sri Lanka's political landscape by winning its first parliamentary election in 1997. In 2000, Dissanayake was elected to the Sri Lankan Parliament and became leader of the JVP in 2014.

Dissanayake is set to face an important obstacle during his presidency: restoring and stabilizing Sri Lanka's economy. The economic difficulties that began in 2019 that culminated in mass protests in 2022 created a critical shortage of foreign currency, which is essential for importing goods from other nations. Hence, the government faced challenges in getting important supplies, especially as it almost faced bankruptcy. The national debt also rose to \$83 billion, while inflation reached an all time high of 70%. The rise in inflation can be linked to the Modern Monetary Theory

economic strategy pioneered by the Sri Lankan government, which saw huge sums of money printed in an attempt to keep lower interest rates to cover for the government's excess spending. However, this came at a cost of standard of living, as many citizens had a hard time purchasing fuel, medication, food and other basic needs.

"The economy is a key factor for voters in any democracy, and public perceptions of economic policies can shape elections. Economic struggles impact election results significantly, as the people are less likely to vote for the incumbent leader that caused their economic struggle and are more likely to seek a new leader who promises radical change," Junior Mihika Moghe said.

Upon his election, Dissanayake declared that he would be taking rigorous anti-corruption measures dedicated to bring reforms within the economic system after the financial crisis. To bolster the economy, he has announced that he will improve sectors for information technology, agriculture and manufacturing. He also promises to continue with negotiations for a \$2.9 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund in order to drag Sri Lanka out of the economic disaster and to decrease the hardships faced

by some of the the nation's poorest individuals.

"After taking a look at his policies, while he may call himself Marxist, he is still working within Sri Lanka's capitalist system. His policies revolve around the growth of trade and the private sector, which a Marxist government or ideology would tend to oppose. Thus, he seems to be a Marxist in name only," Sophomore Oshmi Poddar said.



ISABELLA ZHU ART

## Big Brother Is Watching Us

MICHAEL IM STAFF WRITER

**M**illions of CCTV cameras and mass data collection programs are the reality in the U.K., where a new government

London has one camera per 13 people, putting it in the top 10 most surveilled cities in the world.

Compiled by James Tong  
STAFF WRITER

Investigatory Powers Act, which legally sanctions the government's authority to intercept private digital communication methods. The proposed amendment would expand these powers even further, allowing the British Home Office to prevent tech companies from publishing technical updates that may obstruct the data collecting capabilities of British intelligence agencies and authorizing these intelligence agencies to obtain and use bulk social media data.

These proposals have been met with backlash by tech industry representatives and privacy advocates. The tech industry trade association TechUK aired several complaints in an open letter to British Home Secretary James Cleverly, including accusations that the amendment would erode digital privacy by effectively allowing the British government to undermine basic security measures in the name of public safety.

Additionally, privacy advocacy groups like Big Brother Watch have warned that while government access to social media posts and public camera footage may seem innocuous, access to this bulk data may be used for more sinister aims, like the training of AI facial recognition models or the identification and manipulation of social trends. To them, the amendment amounts to an expansion of surveillance powers, with no regard given for citizens' privacy rights.

However, the British government has denied any

accusations that it intends to use these new powers in this way, although they noted their belief that privacy should not come at a cost to national security, and that democratic institutions should be

involved in these decisions over data rights. The bill appears to be on course to pass without noticeable modification, despite the tech industry continuing to beg British lawmakers for greater scrutiny on it.

This new debacle arose in the context of an already extreme surveillance state in the United Kingdom, with previous Acts giving governments sweeping access to private data, including phone calls, emails, texts, social media posts, personal images and web history. In the city of London, the police have begun to use cameras to monitor and track the faces of suspects on a scale only seen in China, with almost two million cameras discretely deployed in most public spaces. Combined with

AI facial recognition models trained on the aforementioned harvested social media posts, privacy has become an illusion in many cities in the U.K.

"While this surveillance may be helpful to the police, it is a violation of people's natural rights to privacy. No one would want to be stalked 24/7, neither in private nor in public," Junior Ethan Luna said.

In 2021, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights deemed the British government's mass data collection a violation of the rights to privacy and free expression. Privacy advocacy organizations have been opposing these surveillance actions since 2013, when whistleblower Edward Snowden revealed that the British government had been collecting the private communications of millions of their citizens.

"None of this can be justified, no matter what lies about protecting children or preventing crime the

British government says to try and excuse their surveillance of millions of innocent people. At the end of the day, too much surveillance will cause more damage to the public than too little," Senior Pinak Paliwal said.

Outside of the British Isles, governments around the world have been increasing their authority to surveil their citizens, with methods ranging from placing cameras at every street corner to secretly collecting texts, in the name of public safety, purportedly preventing

The UK has over 7.5 million security cameras.

terrorism, crime and social disruptions. However, there are many citizens who are willing to resist this trend both legal and illegal measures; whether it be through bans on data harvesting in Oakland or vandalism of cameras in London, people are willing to go through extreme measures to protect their privacy. Even if the United Kingdom continues to increase surveillance measures, the same debate between safety and liberty will continue across the world.



privacy advocates are campaigning against what they see as a blatant attempt to restrict companies from defending their users' private data.

The bill seeks to amend the 2016



RYAN PARK ART

## Commentator Clarke



**GWEN CARROLL** COMMUNITY NEWS & LAST WORD EDITOR

For 15 years, at each home football game, the same familiar voice has boomed over Pat Tillman Stadium: that of **Gary Clarke**, Math Department. Although he is currently taking time off from announcing at the school's football games, it is but a blip in his lifetime fanaticism for sports.

Clarke first played football at eight years old. He was immediately hooked and played each and every season from then on. In high school, he also tried softball, basketball and baseball, but no sport has truly captured his attention quite like football.

Rather than continue playing football in college, Clarke turned to coaching the school's team, when he began to take an interest in making announcements during games. The head coach at the time, however, refused to let just anybody into the commentary box. He put Clarke through a four-week crash course, where he found that there was much more to making announcements than just knowing the game: he had to learn assorted voice inflections and the do's and don'ts to announcing. Since then, years of experience helped Clarke pin down how to best support the school's players, both in and out of the commentary box.

"For the players, hearing their names called out is a huge morale boost. I spend at least an hour per week learning to pronounce each player's name and put in lots of practice to make sure none of them have to experience having their name butchered over the loudspeakers," Clarke said.

Clarke enjoys watching sports on all scales, not just at the school—namely at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Although he was in Paris for a separate trip, he attended the U.S. vs. Japan soccer quarterfinals, where the United States made the first and only goal during the second overtime. Despite not knowing much about soccer, Clarke was caught up in the crowd's infectious excitement.

"Soccer is not my sport, so I did not expect to be so into the match. Even though I had to constantly ask the people around me to explain what each call meant, I was swept up in the adrenaline. I cannot put into words how incredibly proud I was when the United States finally scored. It may have been the greatest experience of my life," Clarke said.

Whether in Paris or at the school, from the stands or in the commentary box, Clarke's passion for sports and the people who play them has been a constant throughout his life. Although he is sitting out announcing for the 2024-25 football season to recover from a surgery, his dedication to the school's team and intense love of the sport are far from diminished.

DESIGN BY ELEANOR GIL

## Preparing the Teachers of Tomorrow

LILIANA CHAI AND SHINY XU STAFF WRITERS

For college students aspiring to teach, becoming a student teacher is a pivotal step that bridges the gap between theory and practice. In California, all college students working toward a teaching credential must complete 600 hours of fieldwork, or student teaching, where they apply what they have learned in the classroom into practice.

Students begin this process by applying for a student teaching program at a university. In their first semester, they take regular college classes focused on education to understand the basics of teaching psychology. Then, in the second semester, they work closely with a mentor teacher in their subject area, observing, leading parts of lessons, assisting with grading and gradually teaching entire classes. The candidates often connect with professors to find student teaching opportunities, sometimes through pre-existing relationships between their university and local high

schools. San Jose State University (SJSU), for example, has such a relationship with the school where student teacher **Ricky Covey** is gaining hands-on experience under the guidance of **Melissa Webb**, English Department.

"My drama teachers saw something in me that not a lot of people did. They saw the potential that even I did not see in myself, which really inspired me. When I became a teacher, I also adopted my math teacher's teaching philosophy, where I try not to make it a student's favorite class, but rather their best class," Covey said.

Student teaching differs from internships, as interns are full-time, paid teachers with their own classes, whereas student teachers are generally unpaid and supported by a trained teacher. As they advance, their roles increase; in the third semester of their credential program, student teachers assume the role of the mentor teacher for their classes. For example, another student teacher, **Paige Townsend**, is in

her third semester under the mentorship of **Stacy Rapoport**, Art Department.

"In second period Advanced Draw/Paint and fifth period Beginner Draw/Paint, I am responsible for all instruction, lesson plans, and feedback. First and third period—which are also Advanced and Beginning Draw/Paint respectively—are my observation periods, where I provide assistance to students when needed, allowing me to learn through observation and application," Townsend said.

Time management is crucial for student teachers, who must juggle their university coursework, teaching duties and personal lives. For example, in addition to teaching, Townsend must complete her California Teacher Performance Assessment, a large project that includes filming and annotating her teaching sessions, by the end of the semester. Therefore, she is usually at the school every day and does not have any free time during the week. As for **Tia Nguyen**, a Counseling Department intern, she manages

her internship responsibilities at the school three days a week and attends SJSU's night classes, thus balancing her academic and professional commitments.

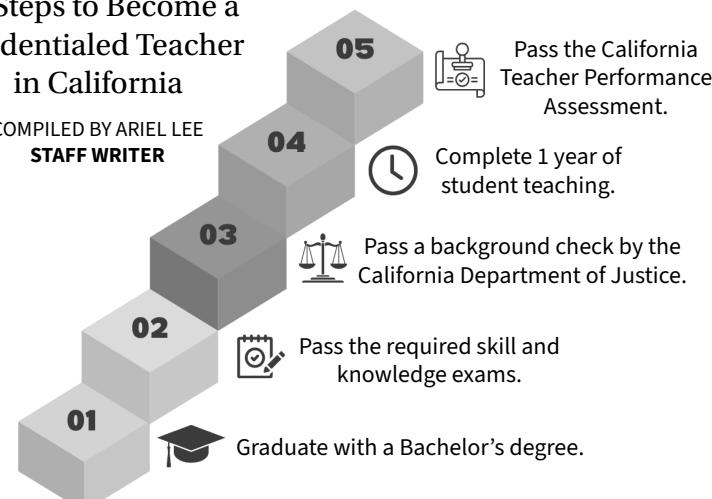
Being a student teacher is simultaneously challenging and rewarding. Former student teacher **Stacy Fernandez**, now a permanent Special Education teacher, recalls both struggles and highlights of her experience, especially during the pandemic.

"I was not confident that I was doing a good job teaching online—it was difficult to reach the students and I doubted my abilities. However, meeting the students I taught in-person and then watching them graduate was amazing. Seeing the results of their hard work when they crossed the stage at the Rose Garden filled me with pride," Fernandez said.

Ultimately, the journey of student teaching prepares aspiring educators for their careers, providing them with essential classroom experience and skills while helping them discover a genuine passion for teaching and helping students thrive.

### 5 Steps to Become a Credentialed Teacher in California

COMPILED BY ARIEL LEE  
STAFF WRITER



**Ricky Covey**, English Department, teaches "To Kill a Mockingbird."

## Supercell Club Sees Superb Signups

JOSHUA YAN STAFF WRITER

**A**nthropomorphic cacti, witches, wizards, and yakuza mobsters have found a new home at the school through the Supercell Club.

Supercell is a video game company best known for its multiplayer mobile games such as "Clash Royale" and "Brawl Stars." This year, some Supercell games—primarily "Brawl Stars"—have experienced a massive resurgence in popularity as fans began moving away from "Clash Royale."

While it used to be the most popular Supercell game, "Clash Royale" began losing players when Supercell added features discouraging free-to-play playstyle. One such feature was evolutions, which introduced various unbalanced features that were locked behind either a

According to PlayerAuctions, the game saw a 100,000 concurrent player decrease last year.

"Brawl Stars is much fairer to free-to-play players like myself. Developers introduced balance changes and ranking system improvements in response to player complaints and brought back items that players asked for. The main attractions that drew me in were the Godzilla and SpongeBob collaborations. Legacy players could also return to previously archived features and rewards with the Classic Brawl Event," Senior **Bryant Vo** said.

Supercell games have had a large presence at school, with many students playing during brunch, tutorial, and, to many teachers' dismay, even class.

Seeing an opportunity in

their popularity, Junior **Max Nguyen** went on to form the Supercell Club with a few of his friends: Sophomore **Kavin Kwak**, Junior **Fernando Gomez-Tagle**, Junior **Orion Jirman**, Junior **Daniel Oh** and Sophomore **Ryan Park**.

"During my Biology Honors class, I noticed two of my classmates were



paywall or dozens of hours of gameplay. "Clash Royale" also introduced a new leveling system, making certain upgrades nearly impossible to attain without paying extra.

playing 'Clash Royale.' Soon, many people started crowding around and talking about their gameplay. In that moment, I realized that mobile games like 'Clash Royale' could be used as a means of connecting people," Nguyen said.

With the primary goal of uniting students through similar interests—along with providing a safe haven amidst concerns about stricter phone regulations at school—the Supercell club is open every other Thursday during lunch in the GBA. Meetings consist of collaborative playtime, discussing game updates, making character tier lists and more. The club had its first meeting on Oct. 9, garnering almost 70 members.

In addition to regular meetings, the Supercell Club is also hosting



**Sophomores Kyuwon Yeom and Ryan Park** gather around for a Brawl Stars tournament in the GBA.

tournaments for various Supercell games. Their first, a "Brawl Stars" tournament, took place on Oct. 23 and involved over 20 teams of 3 players. The winning team won a Brawl Pass+ for each team member and the second place team received regular Brawl Passes. The club plastered posters and QR codes around the school to promote the tournament.

Despite being an entirely new club, the Supercell Club has ballooned in success over the past few weeks. In a culture where many clubs involve academics and social justice issues, the Supercell Club stands out as one that has gained a lot of attention for a lighthearted topic that its members have genuine passion for, creating a unique and refreshing community environment at school.

# Cheating Uncovered; Accountability Discovered

JOSHUA YAN STAFF WRITER AND ANNA YUE ENTERTAINMENT &amp; LIFESTYLE EDITOR

Last year, the school found itself amidst severe violations of academic integrity involving massive distributions of test materials. Initially brought to administrators' attention by a whistleblower, the leaked tests led to an extensive period of investigation that unveiled a network of hundreds of students involved in the spread and use of confidential materials, spanning back several years in multiple subjects and classrooms.

Students proven to be distributing materials were held to a conversation with Principal **Harveen Bal**, and assigned respective consequences based on the severity of their actions. Additional counseling services were provided for every student confronted, as the conviction process was bound to be traumatic. Many students who came forward and admitted to cheating received lighter punishments.

"The cheating was abundantly widespread, and we are aware that many cheaters were never confronted. We decided to only go after those who distributed answers, rather than those who used them because we understand that students confided in cheating because they were facing extreme pressure and stress," Bal said.

According to the University at Buffalo, academic dishonesty typically is caused by poor time management, stress from too many assignments, high expectations and the desire to aid peers. Additionally, students with higher grades are more likely to cheat than those with lower grades. In these cases, students do not cheat because they are struggling, but rather because they wish to remain perfect and are anxious to keep a high academic status.

"Students tend to seek shortcuts on tedious work, and although reasons for cheating like parental expectations and social pressure may be understandable, the action itself is never justified. If a teacher has given adequate resources and teachings, the fault is entirely on the student," Sophomore **Elise Nguyen** said.

The line between whether an action is considered cheating or not is a point of contention.

On some non-assessment assignments, students found it unclear whether or not they were allowed to collaborate with their peers. For assessments, many students used

online resources like Quizlet that contained the same questions as some tests. Many teachers also reused tests from previous years, which students were able to find online or from old students.

Last year's incident also impacted student-teacher relationships—for numerous teachers, it was hurtful to discover that several trusted students obtained their academic achievements unethically. The school reserves the right to notify colleges, and teachers have the ability to rescind any letter of recommendation they submitted since many were written based on fraudulent academic achievements.

After rounds of discussion with the board and consulting a behavior specialist, Bal decided to direct the school towards policies built upon clarity and communication, with emphasis on support and cheating prevention. For example, starting this year in January, the school's academic integrity policy directly taken from the district-issued Parent/Student Handbook is mandated to be seen in every teacher's syllabus. It explicitly states that if a student conducts academic dishonesty, consequences are left to the teacher's discretion; provided evidence of cheating can result in punishments such as detention, suspension, expulsion, reports to colleges and removal from extracurricular activities. This amendment holds the teachers responsible for clearly communicating their policies.

The new Academic Integrity Referral Form fosters an outlet for communication between teachers, students, parents and administrators after a committed cheating. The form enforces a series of action steps, including a teacher-student meeting, direct contact from teacher to parents and a meeting conference between the parties to decide the consequence. While students must be held accountable, the form still aims to offer a place and platform for both the student and the teacher to communicate their feelings and hurt.

"The new policy seems pretty fair. Having a discussion between the teacher and student is very valuable, since it gives students a chance to defend themselves in cases where it is unclear whether or not they have cheated," Senior **Chihiro Shitomi** said.

Additionally, to aid students within the classroom,

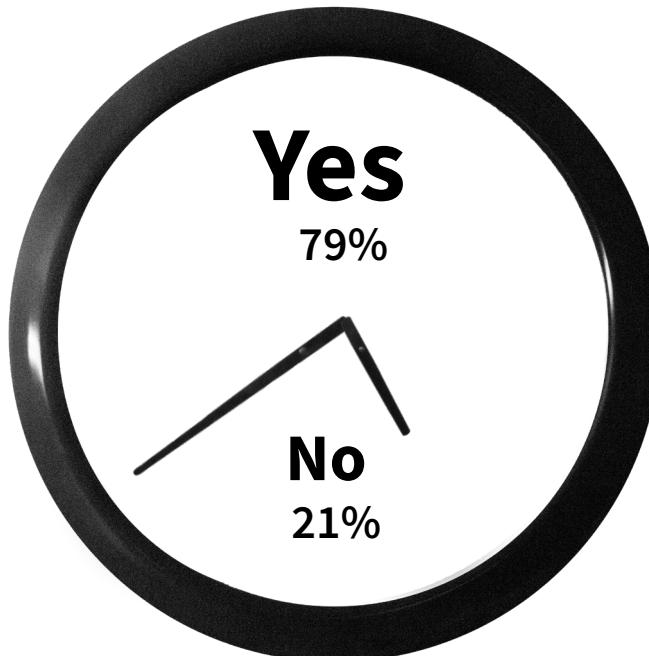
mindset," **Jennifer Touchton**, English Department, said.

The school's administration team has also introduced new schoolwide measures to prevent similar incidents from occurring. The CHARGE matrix was reconstructed and added to the letter of recommendation form so that letters may now

COMPILED BY LAUREN LAW STAFF WRITER

100 students polled

## Poll: Have you ever cheated on school work?



department leaders have conducted subject-specific actions.

"Along with rewriting our tests and creating a larger question bank, we are incorporating more in-class paper assignments and assessments and more free response questions on exams," **Suzanne Paulazzo**, Social Studies Department, said.

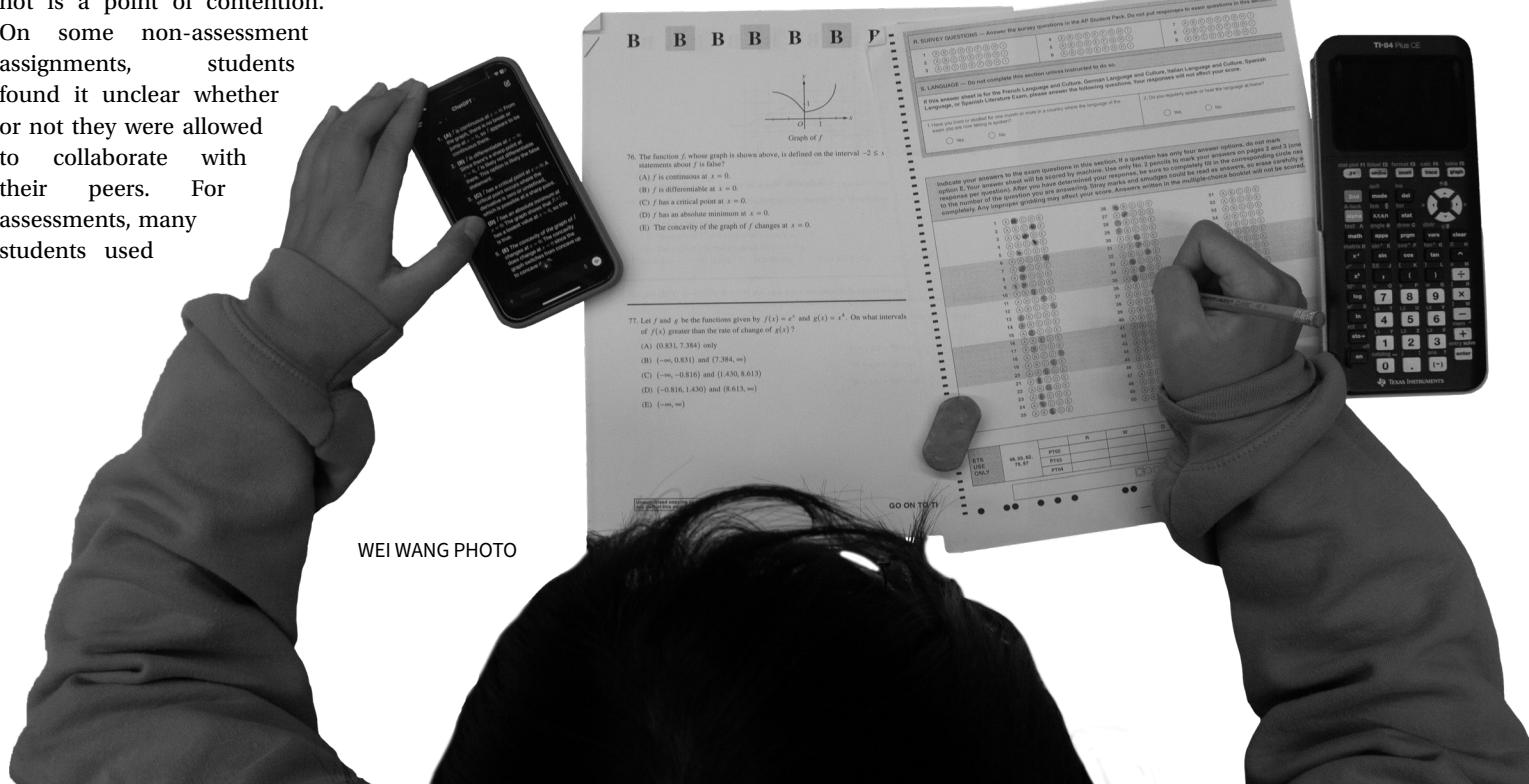
Similarly, AP Language and Composition classes have taken a new approach to decrease incentives for cheating.

"Essay assessments are no longer graded based on the essay itself, but rather to be written independently at home, and grades are awarded for revisions and reflections. Having student grades weighted heavily on the revising and improving process rather than the timed writing itself can better foster a growth

reflect character in combination with academic performance.

To once again emphasize the importance of communication and student perspectives, the school administration plans on having a student council of around 70 students to review the matrix and make suggestions to improve it for next semester.

Last year's incident highlighted a lapse in trust and the need for better communication. Though still in their infancy, the new policies are a step towards repairing broken relationships between students and their teachers. Cheating will never disappear entirely, but the newfound policies and optimism fostered by the administration are an opportunity to start anew and improve in light of the past grievances.



WEI WANG PHOTO

## "How to Avoid Procrastination"



ELEANOR GIL SCHOOL NEWS &amp; FEATURE SCHOOL EDITOR

After a long day at school and an extracurricular, there is barely any time left to finish homework, let alone pursue your quiet hobbies. Seconds blur into hours as you scroll on your phone, and it is nearly midnight—you have not completed anything and would have been better off going to sleep.

Before you say "I am not a morning person," think again. If you are unable to restore energy after naps, consider going to bed early and waking up at dawn. Harvard Business Review claims people who consistently sleep and wake up early generally feel a greater sense of urgency to complete tasks than later sleepers. Early birds increase their proactivity and thus productivity, meaning they open up more time for themselves later in the day.

Additionally, create a conducive environment to work proactively after school. Shut off your phone and temporarily quarantine it in another room. Out of sight, out of mind. Take this action without hesitation, because your brain may lapse back into the habit of opening a social media app within just a few seconds.

The aforementioned tips may not be a long-term panacea for your procrastination, especially when you are on the verge of burn-out. Thus, you must tackle the root of your fatigue, not just their effects. Sahil Bloom, Stanford graduate and entrepreneur, recommends asking yourself whether you are trying to overcome the things that drain your energy. To gain awareness of these obstacles, categorize how you felt after completing an activity into one of the three: drained, neutral or energized. Document this information in a spreadsheet or calendar, and at the end of the week, look at trends. Identify the most energy-draining activities and promptly attempt to tweak them to make them neutral, or eliminate them.

Inevitably, you are bound to experience stress. However, by following these steps, hopefully you can become more conscious of how you spend your life and reduce unnecessary burdens that ensue procrastination.

### Key steps to improvement:

- sleep early, wake up early
- lock your phone in another room
- cut off activities that drain your energy completely



## Raising Reefs

ISABELLA ZHU ART

MICHAEL IM STAFF WRITER

Tropical waters; an endless array of colorful coral; and a host of fish, sharks, seahorses, sea turtles and other lively creatures swimming by: these are the images one conjures up when thinking of Florida's coral reefs. However, in the past few decades, these subaquatic spectacles have been threatened by rising temperatures.

In the past few decades, the Florida barrier reef, once the third largest coral reef in the world, has shrunk dramatically. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration estimates give a decrease in coral cover of around 90% since the 1970s, and much of what is left is colorless and dying. Climate change poses an existential threat to these reefs, although recent

developments provide hope for their preservation, and maybe even their restoration.

Coral is a strange type of immobile animal, related more to jellyfish than any other creature. It forms symbiotic relationships with tiny, colorful, photosynthesizing algae, providing shelter in exchange for food. This shelter comes in the form of reefs—large structures of calcium carbonate, constructed by

hundreds of thousands of small individual coral colonies.

Thousands of other species dwell in the nooks and crannies of these reefs, feeding on each other in convoluted food webs. These species and their biological relationships make reefs extremely biodiverse, housing about a quarter of marine species, despite being found in less than a thousandth of the ocean's area. This earns reefs their nickname of "rainforests of the sea."

However, when temperatures rise above about 87 degrees Fahrenheit, the coral eject their algal partners, lose their colors and turn a pale white, in a process known as "coral bleaching." Normally, the algae returns when temperatures cool, but climate change has pushed these reefs to their limits, with prolonged periods of extreme temperatures preventing this.

Without the algae's food, the corals starve and the reef dies, leaving behind a dead husk. This bleaching occurred all across Florida's reefs in the summer of 2023, where a massive heat

wave kept temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit for months on end, seeing some areas lose up to 75% of coral.

"Visiting a coral reef in the Virgin Islands was a cool and new experience as it was my first and only time visiting one. However, I have never heard of climate change's threat to coral reefs. People should help spread awareness about this threat because I never knew anything about it," Junior Chris Chen said.

Unlike last year, this year's summer has proved to be much kinder, giving many marine ecologists and coral reef advocates hope for some future success in coral restoration. Organizations like the Coral Restoration Foundation seek to not only protect existing coral reefs, but create new reefs and restore past levels of coral.

By exploiting coral's innate ability to create new colonies from fragments of another, seven coral

nurseries just off the coast of Florida produce thousands of these coral fragments each year to be nurtured into budding colonies. Eventually, these coral colonies are attached to designated restoration sites in the Florida Keys, where they begin to grow on their own while remaining monitored by researchers and volunteers. Since its inception in 2007, the Foundation has successfully restored some 366,000 square feet of coral, although this is only a minuscule fraction of the coral previously destroyed.

"I once went snorkeling at a coral reef in Hawaii, and I enjoyed the colorful sights there. I have heard a lot about coral bleaching and animals losing their homes in the reefs. To help, action should be focused against climate change itself, as destruction to coral reefs is just one of its many terrible effects," Sophomore Creighton Voon said.

Human-driven global warming imperils coral reefs around the world, with some estimates putting 99 percent of reefs at risk within the next two decades if current carbon emission trends are not reversed.

Still, there is a chance that these wonders of the sea survive. Current efforts are proving promising, albeit limited. If these efforts bear fruit, Florida's reefs may return to their native beauty.

*Poll: Have you gone snorkeling at a coral reef before?*

**Yes: 41%      No: 59%**

109 students polled  
COMPILED BY AMIE AHN  
STAFF WRITER

ISABELLA ZHU ART

## Rebuilding Coasts One Oyster at a Time

JAMES YU SPORTS EDITOR  
AND LILIANA CHAI STAFF WRITER

A lone shell rests on the seabed floor. The last of its ancestry, the oyster that calls that sand home is a final vestige of the oyster reefs which lined European and American shores decades ago. However, recent reef restoration projects across the world are working to reverse trends in declining oyster populations.

Despite their former abundance along coastlines around the world, oyster reefs have largely disappeared. Indeed, the Paleontological Research Institution states that various factors, including overharvesting, pollution, habitat destruction, and disease have caused an 85% decline in oyster reefs worldwide. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science corroborates this finding, reporting that out of 144 bays surveyed, oyster reefs had an abundance of less than 10%, compared to their previous abundance of nearly 70%. Specifically, a 2024 paper published in the scientific journal *Nature Sustainability* found that overexploitation by major commercial fisheries led to the collapse of oyster reefs across Europe, destroying over 1.7 million hectares (4.2 million acres) of oyster

reefs—which news publication The Guardian compares in size to the entire country of Northern Ireland.

"The prevalence of oysters in cuisine makes them a prime target for overexploitation by fisheries. If people want to continue enjoying oyster dishes, it is crucial that oyster reefs are restored to prevent the species from disappearing off plates entirely," Junior Chris Baek said.

In the vibrant depths of coastal ecosystems, oysters cluster together on hard, submerged surfaces near salty or brackish coastal waters, with newer ones piling on older shells. As they develop, they fuse to form rock-like reefs that provide habitats for marine plants and animals. By removing algae, sediments and pollutants from nutrient-filled water, oysters act as natural filters that improve water quality. A single oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water a day, according to the One Earth Foundation. This process creates a nurturing habitat that supports a wide variety of marine life, including crabs,

scallops and fish. In addition, oysters are a protective barrier for underwater vegetation and waterfront communities during storms and floods, as the well-established beds provide resilience against strong waves and stabilize the seafloor.

"For coastal communities, including the Bay Area, preventing flooding and maintaining stable shorelines is key to these communities' safety. Given the rising threat of land loss from rising sea levels, restoring oyster reefs across shorelines and protecting our coast is imperative," Sophomore Lasya Madineni said.

Luckily, restoration projects are aiming to restore declining oyster reefs worldwide. In the Chesapeake Bay, where only 3% of its historical oyster population remains, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is collaborating with outside organizations to restore oyster populations in 10 tributary areas by 2025. Oyster reef restoration operates by adding substrates to the seabed in order to generate

With the growing interest in protecting oyster reefs, restoration projects will continue to expand as lone shells are reunited along the seabed floor, all while continuing to improve community engagement along the way.

ISABELLA ZHU ART



# Oakland A's Strike Out

NIRU SHIVAKUMAR AND ANDREW XIE STAFF WRITERS

Sports teams have the "striking" ability to unify, connect and create bonds among fans and within cities. On Sept. 26, Oakland Athletics (A's) fans unified one last time behind the team in a win over the Texas Rangers, soaking up every final minute in the Oakland Coliseum. The game marked the end of a 56-year-old connection between the A's to the city and its fans, as one of Major League Baseball's most successful franchises is set to leave the city of Oakland and its dedicated fanbase. Beginning in 2025, the A's will play at the Sutter Health Park in Sacramento, where they will play until permanently moving to Las Vegas in 2028.

This marks the third instance in the past five years that Oakland has lost a major league sports franchise. Two prominent teams from Oakland—The Golden State Warriors and the Raiders—recently moved, with the Warriors relocating to San Francisco in 2019 and the Raiders to Las Vegas in 2020, where they both saw revenue increases.

"I'm disappointed by the recent trend of Oakland teams relocating, as the city has a long-standing connection to its sports teams. These moves feel disheartening to me and countless other fans, as they take away our cherished memories of watching and supporting them," Freshman **Lucas Sutijono** said.

The Oakland Coliseum—the home of the A's—has become a shell of its former self. Its deteriorating condition is why the team's owner—John Fisher—began looking to build a new stadium for the A's soon after he bought the team in 2005. The A's originally proposed to build a new waterfront ballpark in 2018, moving away from the degraded Oakland Coliseum. The proposed 35,000-seat ballpark, known as the Howard Terminal project, would have come with other developments including a 400-room hotel, office spaces, and 3,000 units of affordable housing, benefiting the Oakland community.

But when the plans for Howard Terminal were reportedly impacted due to Covid, the A's began exploring the option of relocating entirely. Relocation plans fell into limbo by late 2022 when Fisher missed the deadline to finalize the stadium plan in Oakland, prompting him to switch lanes and

relocate the team to Las Vegas.

For the past 18 months, A's fans have expressed their anger and shock towards the move. The concession stands at the stadium are mostly shuttered, and the stadium stands silent without the cheers of their loyal fans. Criticism towards the team's owner is all too familiar: fans vilified Fisher for capping the team's salary to one of the lowest in the league, trading away some of their most talented players and raising season ticket prices. Fans have also tried to reverse boycott the team on multiple occasions. Still, the most significant example came in June 2023, when fans piled into the Oakland Coliseum to protest the proposed move to Las Vegas, chanting "Sell the team!" and "Stay in Oakland!" Walter J Haas—whose family owned the A's from 1980 to 1985 during the team's greatest successes in the Bay, winning a World Series title while setting a franchise attendance record—calls Fisher's move "frankly unforgivable". But Fisher was unfazed, taking the Las Vegas government stadium funding which amounts to \$300 million less than what Oakland set aside.

The move to Las Vegas was largely due to economic considerations. Considering that San Francisco and Las Vegas are much bigger cities than Oakland, the team's management saw more opportunities, especially comparing the profits of other teams: San Francisco's 49ers and Las Vegas's Raiders raked in 622 million and 780 million after the 2023 season respectively—compared to the A's' \$240 million.

"It is unlikely that another major sports team will establish itself in Oakland, given its smaller market size compared to major U.S. cities like San Francisco, Chicago and New York. Larger cities tend to be more economically advantageous for teams, attracting more sponsorship, revenue, and fan engagement, making them more appealing relocation destinations than Oakland," Junior **Raahil Sengupta** said.

The loss is devastating for Oakland, and although teams want to stay loyal to their fan base, many other factors come to play such as affordability, effectiveness, the future of the team and the kind of opportunities it will bring to the city.

## SCOREBOARD

## BOYS VARSITY WATER POLO - 10/09

	12-8	
Leland (15-0-9)		Leigh (5-0-11)

## GIRLS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL - 10/09

	3-0	
Leland (16-0-13)		Ann Sobrato (11-0-17)

## GIRLS VARSITY TENNIS - 10/10

	5-2	
Leland (9-0-6)		Branham (20-0-11)

## GIRLS VARSITY FIELD HOCKEY - 10/10

	3-0	
Leland (4-9-3)		Del Mar (1-4-3)

## BOYS VARSITY FOOTBALL - 10/11

	35-7	
Leland (7-0-3)		Westmont (4-0-5)

## GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL - 10/31

	32-0	
Leland (9-0-11)		Overfelt (0-0-17)

## BOYS VARSITY FOOTBALL - 10/31

	35-8	
Leland (7-0-3)		Gilroy (2-0-7)

## BOYS VARSITY FOOTBALL - 11/08

	0-23	
Leland (7-0-3)		Willow Glen (10-0-0)

# Calgorithm

ANDREW DUVAL OPINIONS & FEATURE WORLD EDITOR  
AND TERESA SUN STAFF WRITER

After a challenging last season, University of California Berkeley's football team found itself on shaky ground: with financial struggles culminating in the end of the Pacific 12 (PAC-12) college football conference, Cal was without a conference to compete in. Although eventually joining the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Cal's new member status combined left the school's football team in uncharted territory. Amid this, a quirky phenomenon emerged from the digital world: Calgorithm.

Calgorithm has the potential to reshape how schools engage with their sports programs, blending digital humor with traditional athletic enthusiasm.

But the Calgorithm isn't confined to the online world. At games, Berkeley students can be seen waving meme-themed banners and dressed up in costumes inspired by the trend. During the highly anticipated matchup against Miami University, memes were even displayed on big screens as fans chanted viral phrases. This trend has significantly influenced Cal's football season; it fostered a new culture of enthusiasm and engagement among students, many of whom previously had little interest in football, bridging the gap between Berkeley's computer science nerds and sports enthusiasts.

"Calgorithm has changed Cal football by showing Berkeley's fun and spirited side. It will probably evolve due to fluctuating social media trends, platforms and styles. The Calgorithm reflects Berkeley's progressive values by using humor to challenge stereotypes about the student body," Sophomore **Jonathan Namba** said.

Other schools within the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) are taking notice of Berkeley's influence, with some even trying to emulate Berkeley by creating their own versions of the Calgorithm. Notably, Miami University and Oregon State University developed their own versions of the meme, featuring Miami's high-energy and exciting atmosphere and Oregon State's outdoorsy, close-knit community.

Overall, Calgorithm could spark greater changes in college football culture as a whole. With the growth of internet culture—primarily among younger fans that participate in and often view college football—it could wind up playing a greater role in college football in the future, with similar memes being associated with other teams, perhaps even manifesting in official posters, dances and other forms of team expression.



# GAMES ACROSS THE CENTURIES

JAMES TONG STAFF WRITER

The first ancient Olympic Games may have taken place in Greece nearly three millennia ago, and the Persian Empire may have fallen two millennia ago, but the games people played there have endured the test of time. From board games to sports, many modern leisure activities are the evolutions of games played by ancestors of centuries past. These cultural games continue to influence modern games today.

The ancient Olympics debuted in 776 BC in Olympia, Greece; according to mythology, Greek gods competed in the first games, eventually turning the Olympics into a religious festival in honor of Zeus. Tens of thousands of Greeks watched the Games, where male athletes competed in events including foot races, jumping, wrestling, boxing and discus throwing. This participation was as much about unification of Greeks as it was about showcasing sports. Namely, the tradition of the Olympic Truce allowed safe participation in the ancient Olympic Games for all athletes and spectators, even in times of violence.

The International Olympic Committee decided to revive the concept of the Olympic Truce to use the power of sport to promote peace. The modern Olympics emerged 1503 years after the final recorded ancient Olympic Games with almost entirely different events and venues on an international scope—yet the legacy of Greek culture continues to shape the spirit of the event.

Despite being a centuries-old game of strategy, chess also continues to be played by people of all ages, over a board or online. Shatranj is an early form of chess, originating from Persia in the 6th century with largely similar rules modern chess arises from Persian roots such as "rukh" meaning "the king is dead." Shatranj was common Europe, where it evolved into the international los juegos," a thirteenth-century Spanish manuscript spread to Europe, it became especially popular among the upper class of Italy, Spain and England.

"While video games integrate computer technology to make it more appealing to players, the ideas of competition and strategy are the main factors that make a game fun. Chess, for example, has no particular visual appeal, yet its limitless possibilities keep the game difficult and enjoyable," Senior Lin Jiang said.

Another significant cultural game that has endured time for centuries, mancala, represents the core of ancient Egyptian culture. Players move stones, seeds or shells across pits in the game board to capture the opponent's pieces. This represents agricultural as piece movement as storage. Mancala also plays interaction through its gameplay

cultures, per the Savannah African Art Museum. The persistence of the game in modern societies

Board games and sports competitions are not the only way games have shown their prominence in ancient to modern society. Marco Polo, often played in swimming pools between friends today, can be traced back to ancient Greece in a game called the Blind Man's Bluff. A player was blindfolded and had to tag the others using sound and touch—almost identical to Marco Polo. The game was played by both children and adults, from cultures as diverse as Nigeria and England, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

"The preservation of ancient games through history demonstrates how culture spreads through the world. The qualities of these games are so important to humans that they often continue to be played, even after cultural mixing from ancient societies to the modern day," Sophomore Darshan Patel said.

Whether played for competition, strategy or enjoyment, the legacy of these games carries on in our everyday lives. In a world where technology constantly evolves, the timeless natures of these ancient games offer a reminder of the enduring human desire for cultural continuity, serving as bridges between the past and the present and between different peoples and cultures.

KABADDI IS A TRADITIONAL INDIAN SPORT FIRST PLAYED AROUND 1500 BCE WHERE TWO TEAMS OF SEVEN PLAYERS AIM TO SCORE MORE POINTS THAN THE OTHER TEAM. ONE PLAYER FROM THE ATTACKING TEAM ENTERS THE OPPONENT'S COURT, TAGGING AS MANY OPPONENT PLAYERS AS POSSIBLE BEFORE RETURNING TO THEIR SIDE, ALL WHILE CHANTING THE WORD "KABADDI." PROFESSIONAL KABADDI IS THE SECOND MOST WATCHED SPORT IN INDIA.

SENET, A BOARD GAME ORIGINATING IN 3000 BCE EGYPT, WAS POPULAR WITH BOTH PHARAOHS AND COMMONERS. TWO PLAYERS THROW SETS OF TWO-SIDED STICKS TO MOVE TEN PAWNS AROUND A BOARD TO SYMBOLIZE THE JOURNEY TO THE AFTERLIFE.

COMPILED BY SHINY XU  
STAFF WRITER

THE ROYAL GAME OF UR IS ONE OF THE OLDEST BOARD GAMES IN THE WORLD, FIRST PLAYED IN THE EARLY THIRD MILLENNIUM BCE IN MESOPOTAMIA. IT WAS A VERY POPULAR GAME ALL ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST, WITH BOARDS EVEN FOUND IN SRI LANKA. TWO PLAYERS HAVE SEVEN COUNTERS AND THROW DICE TO MOVE TO A SQUARE AT THE END OF THE BOARD BEFORE THEIR OPPONENT.

THE MESOAMERICAN BALLGAME, INVENTED IN 2500 BCE, QUICKLY SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE AREA. EACH TEAM OF TWO OR THREE PEOPLE AIMED TO GET A BALL THROUGH A RING WITHOUT USING THEIR HANDS. IT HAD RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE, AS LOSING TEAMS WERE OFTEN SACRIFICED TO THE GODS.

- GAMES -

PEOPLE AND PLAYTIME

ELEANOR WANG ART

DESIGN BY GWEN CARROLL



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