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Tiger



VOLUME 107 ISSUE 7
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SOUTH PASADENA HIGH SCHOOL
1401 FREMONT AVE, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030

Students benefit from return to in-person learning



STORY SOFIA ALVA
PHOTO ELLA JAYASEKERA
GRAPHICS CHARLOTTE COHEN

Students in Cohorts A and B have reported a significant improvement in their learning experience since the start of the new hybrid model on Thursday, April 15. According to a survey Tiger administered to 256 students, 63 percent of those in Cohorts A and B believe their learning has benefitted on the days they attend school in person.

For many students, the return to school has meant more hands-on learning.

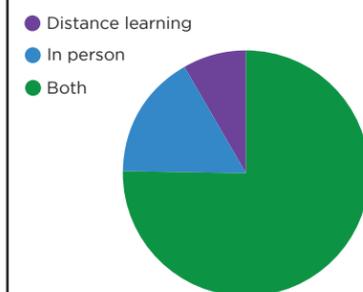
“I really like using my hands, and it is better for me when instruction is interactive,” junior Sydney Morrow said. “In-person school is a great option because I get to write a lot more on paper and I spend less time on Zoom. I am also more encouraged to participate in class when I can physically see the teacher.”

Junior Levi Srebalus echoed this sentiment, adding that in-person learning has allowed for less distractions during class.

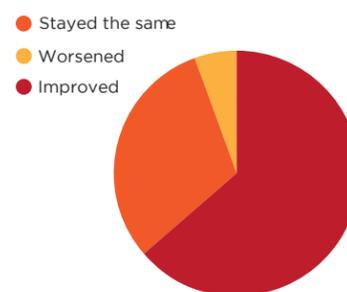
“When I’m in person, I’m a lot less likely to get distracted with something like my phone or other things that I would have at my disposal at home,” Srebalus said.

Throughout the transition from distance to hybrid learning, teachers have adopted several different methods of instruction for their at-home and in-person students. Many teachers have opted to keep in-person

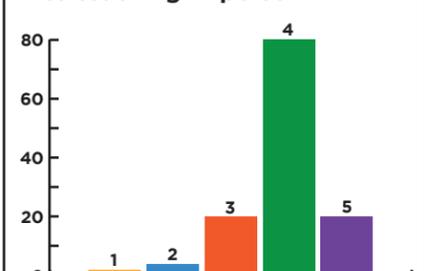
Are your teachers prioritizing...



While being in person has your quality of learning...



On a scale of 1-5 how well have your teachers adapted to teaching in-person?



students off Zoom and project distance learning students on a screen in the front of the class. In some classes, teachers have even been able to facilitate discussion between both groups of students.

According to the survey, 75 percent of students believe that their teachers are equally prioritizing in-person and at-home students.

“My teachers have made sure to either divide up some of the instruction to both groups, or have just addressed both the Zoom class and in-person class simultaneously,” Srebalus said. “There have been minor tech hiccups, but for the most part the [teachers] were more prepared than I expected. Their teaching hasn’t changed much at all, which isn’t a bad thing.”

Students decided last August which cohort to be in, but were allowed to switch once the hybrid schedule

was solidified in March. About 5 percent of students surveyed in Cohorts A and B regret returning to campus, while less than 2 percent of students in Cohort C regret remaining in distance learning. Many students who chose to remain in distance learning expressed that convenience was a determining factor in their decision.

“I chose to stay online because of my schedule,” sophomore Tia Guang said. “This year, because everything was initially online, my school schedule and club schedule sometimes are right against each other. This means that about two minutes after school I’ll sometimes join another meeting. With hybrid, that meant I may be late to some of my after school meetings [if I attended school in person].”

The hybrid schedule is set to continue until the end of the school year in June, and the 2021-2022 school year will begin completely in-person.



RELATIONSHIPS

Because each high school grade is tantamount to a different life stage, inter-grade relationships are extremely unbalanced.
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FEARLESS

Taylor Swift’s rerelease of her quintessentially high school album is an opportunity to introspect, maybe now with less raw (pre) teenage angst.
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SKYE HARRIS

Junior track star Skye Harris, recently elected as the next ASB Commissioner of Athletics, talks with Tiger about her plans to improve sports.
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NEWS

Newly reopened L.A. activities attract visitors

STORY GEORGIA PARSONS
PHOTOS KATELYN HERNANDEZ

After over a year filled with shutdowns of art museum, movie theater, and theme park, L.A. County's successful vaccine rollout and move into orange tier has prompted many recreational reopenings.

Huntington Galleries

Although the Huntington Gardens have been open for the past several months, the grounds' three art galleries have been closed to visitors since the beginning of the pandemic. However, new county guidelines allowed all three galleries to open to the public on Saturday, April 17.

Throughout the course of the pandemic, the Huntington has diligently followed coronavirus precautions, and the galleries were no exception. Only certain numbers of people were allowed to be in each room at a time, a safeguard that the docents followed carefully.

Museum guides excitedly welcomed visitors back this weekend, as several prominent art projects and installations had been completed over the past year. "Project Blue Boy," an 18-month restoration project to the iconic "The Blue Boy" painting by Thomas Gainsborough was recently completed and opened for viewing. The Huntington also welcomed a new exhibition titled "Made in L.A." presenting works from 30 L.A.-based artists featuring a range of art from sculpture, paintings, films, and even immersive audio performances.

Farmers Market

Despite the weekly presence of produce sellers at the South Pasadena Farmers Market throughout the pandemic, ready-made meals from food vendors have been absent for most of the winter up until three weeks ago when they were allowed to begin serving again.

For the past several weeks, the Farmers Market has been crowded with customers, produce sellers, musicians, and fragrant cuisine from food vendors. Even on a chilly Thursday, flocks of South Pasadenans gathered at the market to purchase fresh food.

"I have definitely seen more people coming into [the market], because they're less afraid. I often hear



SOCIALLY-DISTANCED GALLERY AND MOVIE THEATER PATRONS ENJOYED IN-PERSON VIEWINGS in accordance with health and safety guidelines.

customers saying 'this is the first time I've come in a year,'" vendor Jose Guzman said.

Movie Theaters

One local movie theater that reopened in the past couple of weeks is the Laemmle's Playhouse 7 in Pasadena, which plays mainly independent, foreign, and art films.

The Laemmle Theaters of the Los Angeles area have been playing strictly virtual movies throughout the course of the pandemic. These movies are available for rent on their website, all of which will still be accessible throughout the reopening.

In accordance with L.A. County mandates and CinemaSafe protocols, the theater is open at 50 percent capacity. The theater's buildings have also been equipped with enhanced ventilation systems, plexiglass barriers, hand sanitizing stations, and extra masks, general manager Geoff Waugaman explains.

"It hasn't been incredibly busy, but I think it's just because we have a limited schedule right now and [minimal] hours of operation," Waugaman said. "I think that [business] will pick up once the state opens up more and people are vaccinated and comfortable coming back to movies."

The theater will continue to comply with L.A. County guidelines and plans to open up further as cases continue to lower.



FARMERS MARKET VENDORS OFFER READY-MADE FOOD to visitors for the first time since the coronavirus spike in November and December of 2020.

Celebrations for the senior class continue in hybrid learning

STORY LILIAN ZHU
PHOTO SARAH LEE

The Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) has begun planning the graduation ceremony and other events for the senior class. Unlike previous years, the coronavirus pandemic has brought unusual challenges, resulting in new adaptations of prior traditions.



THE PTSA CELEBRATED SENIORS whose year was cut short with games, giveaways, and food from local businesses.

This year's graduation ceremony will take place on the Roosevelt Field on Wednesday, June 2 with additional restrictions such as limited audience capacity.

The coronavirus pandemic has prevented all school dances from taking place, including prom, which is hosted by the Associated Student Body (ASB). The PTSA, however, is looking to organize a senior graduation party and has sent out surveys to seniors for input.

Traditionally, seniors attend Grad Nite at Disneyland, but this year, the event has been relocated to Universal Studios Hollywood. The event will take place from 3-9 p.m. on any of the six following days: May 13, 19, 20, 27, and June 10. Admission is \$75 per person and includes all rides, shows, and attractions.

"As a senior it has been a little weird to have most of my final year of high school online, but I am excited that we are able to have a graduation and homecoming," senior Amelia Jarolim said. "At first it was a bit sad to be missing out on some senior activities, but worth sacrificing for the safety concerns of the pandemic. Also, it has made me appreciate the little things and be thankful just to go to school at least a few days a week."

Laura Morales, one of the head coordinators of senior activities in the PTSA, expressed her pride in the senior

class and their resilience throughout their year of distanced and hybrid learning.

"We could not be more proud of how our seniors handled this final year learning from home. They were brave, tenacious and most importantly, they didn't feel sorry for themselves," Morales said. "They got up everyday and looked to their future. They have proved to be the greatest graduating class in present history."

In an attempt to continue the annual Homecoming tradition, ASB has also begun the voting process for the Royal Tigers. Homecoming typically takes place during first semester but was postponed due to the pandemic. This past week students placed their nominations, which were then narrowed down to three contenders for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, and 11 for seniors.

"Keeping SPHS traditions alive during this pandemic is of utmost importance to ASB and having some sort of homecoming is crucial," Commissioner of Spirit, junior Ava Page said. "This has been hard to publicize due to the pandemic but it will be just as fun."

A second round of voting is set to take place on May 7, narrowing down nominations to one in grades 9-11, and three for seniors. Instead of the typical banquet, the selected Royal Tigers will receive gift cards.

Tiger is a strong supporter of mental health and wellness.

Check out our list of local mental health resources at tigernewspaper.com/mental-health-resources/.

Please reach out to us at sphstigernewspaper@gmail.com to suggest services we should add to the list.

- 24/7 Hotlines
- 911 Alternatives
- Community and SPHS Services



Virtual business teams place nationally

STORY KATIE HOHMAN
PHOTO COURTESY OF
SPHS VIRTUAL BUSINESS TEAM

Virtual Business teams Pebbly and MyMeals placed at the National Business Plan competition on Monday, April 19 and Wednesday, April 21, scoring fourth and fifth, respectively. The virtual contest featured over 600 competitors and reaffirmed SPHS' spot as one of the top high schools for virtual business.

The varsity Virtual Business company, **Pebbly**, is a pet rock company inspired by the work of Gary Dahl, the original creator of the pet rock. Pebbly brings pet rocks to the 21st century by blending a physical product with a **virtual experience**.

Customers can buy a traditional pet rock or opt to indulge in a virtual rock instead, which the varsity team has named Pebbly Pals. Through these Pebbly Pals, the company hopes to help young people develop stronger social and emotional skills, both during and after the coronavirus pandemic.

The JV Virtual Business company, MyMeals, focuses on selling and delivering healthy meal kits to individuals. Through their kits, the company is targeting young adults who live alone and might be too busy to make their own food.

Each team's success at nationals comes after months of practice and revision, with the help of advisor Cathy Mason. In order to make it onto the national stage, both teams had to place at the regional and state competitions, while also making it through two rounds of nationals. In the end, it was only the top eight teams that were allowed to move on to the final round of nationals. SPHS' history of success at nationals created additional pressure for both teams; the 2019 varsity Virtual Business team,



BY ADDING A WELLNESS LENS AND ONLINE WORLD TO THE ICONIC PET ROCK, varsity Virtual Business created a product that boosts youth's socio-emotional skills amidst the pandemic. The business plan team (above) ranked fourth in the nation.

iKOMO, and the 2015 varsity Virtual Business team, Oasis, both placed first at nationals.

"We were so surprised that we made it past [the first round of nationals] but our last round, in the top eight, felt really good," senior Olivia Yanover, Pebbly's Chief Marketing Officer, said. "It was one of our most confident runs... We had all of our energy and passion."

The Business Plan competitions for both varsity and JV required each team to adapt to the new online format. The two groups had to develop a written business plan and work with their technology departments to create a presentation that summarized their company, which they then presented to a panel of judges via Zoom.

Despite the challenging competition style and format, members of the Business Plan teams for Pebbly and

MyMeals have maintained strong socio-emotional connections and continue to develop new ones. The group-focused class was able to teach students about teamwork, which allowed each member to feel more confident during competitions.

"Business Plan has really taught me what it's like to not only be a part of a team but a friend to other people," Yanover said. "I think that [Pebble Business Plan] works so well and we have done so well because we are such a tight group. Just learning how to bounce off of each other's energy and how to understand when one person is feeling down... is something I am going to bring with me to other groups [in the future]."

The Virtual Business program recently finished its tryouts for the coming school year and competitions for the 2021-2022 school year will begin in December.

Students age 16 and older seize vaccination opportunity

STORY SOFIA ALVA
PHOTO RUSSELL FARMARCO

Students who have received the coronavirus vaccine, which became officially available to all California residents over the age of 16 on Thursday, April 15, have felt safer knowing they are protecting themselves and their communities.

Out of the three vaccines currently available — Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, and Pfizer — Pfizer is the only one being administered to those under 18. Senior Lindsay Michels received the J & J vaccine, which requires only one dose as opposed to Moderna and Pfizer's two.

"I wanted to get vaccinated to go back to regular life," Michels said. "Receiving my shot was the first step to being able to feel safe while shopping, being with friends, competing, and everything else that I've been missing."

In the days leading up to April 15, many vaccination sites were reporting extra doses — an opportunity junior Sofia Farmarco capitalized on.

"On my birthday, my friend's dad called her and told her about an opening to get the vaccine at White Memorial Hospital," Farmarco said. "He asked if I would want to get the vaccine that day too, and I said yes. We waited in the line to get the vaccine and I ended up getting it faster than expected. My arm was really sore after I got it, but I've experienced that with other shots I've gotten over the years. The worst part was the headache I got the next day,

but luckily it didn't last too long. Other than that, I didn't have any [bad] reactions to the vaccine."

Coronavirus vaccine mandates have also been a topic of discussion among students of both high schools and colleges. Michels is committed to Colby College and she sees the value in the immunization requirement if the vaccine is made easily accessible to students by schools.

"I'm going to a small school with 2,000 kids, almost all of which live on campus. It makes sense for us to be vaccinated, to share close quarters and stay safe in the small town where my school is," Michels said. "Having the vaccine will hopefully restore normalcy in education — something I've been missing and needing the past year."

While some waited until they were eligible through California's tier system, others sought out the vaccine unconventionally. Freshman Michelle Shadmon has been participating in a Moderna vaccine trial since February.

"We had to go to a clinic where the [doctors] explained everything," Shadmon said. "They took our vitals, we did a coronavirus test, and they also took our blood. Then, two doctors or nurses came in and gave us either the real vaccine or a placebo shot. I still have not been unblinded, so I don't know if I have gotten the vaccine yet, but just knowing that I may have it is super exciting."

L.A. County has administered vaccines to almost four million residents thus far, and is currently in the state's orange, or moderate risk, tier.



ALTHOUGH HER FAMILY WAS ALREADY VACCINATED, junior Sofia Farmarco determinedly sought immunization as soon as it became available.

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New episodes every Tuesday

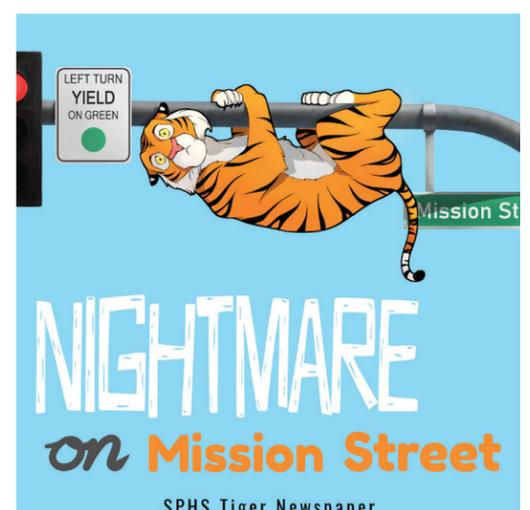


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Earth Day Inspires Local Action

Thousands of people every year have pledged their support for environmental awareness and protection on April 22's Earth Day since its inception in 1970. Tiger explores Earth Day's history and impact today in South Pasadena.

STORY KATIE HOHMAN, ADAM KWOH, & ZOE SCHLAAK

PAGE DESIGN CHARLOTTE COHEN & TERRY SONG

GRAPHIC CHARLOTTE COHEN

Earth Day History

1962: Rachel Carson publishes her novel *Silent Spring*, which sheds light on pollution and brings climate change to the forefront of the public's mind.

1969: A junior senator from Wisconsin named Gaylord Nelson recruits activist Denis Hayes to create a teach-in that could educate college students about the significant dangers of air and water pollution.

April 22, 1970: Roughly 20 million Americans take to the streets to protest human-caused climate change. There are massive coast-to-coast rallies in cities, towns, and communities.

1971: The first official Earth Day leads to the creation of the EPA and the passage of OSHA and the Clean Air Act under President Nixon.

April 22, 1990: A group of activists collaborates with Denis Hayes to create an international Earth Day demonstration, which finally brings environmental issues to the global stage.

2021: Earth Day engages more than a billion people every year and has become a major stepping stone on the pathway of protecting and preserving the planet.

Library celebrates nature

The City of South Pasadena tackled Earth Day awareness in an unusual way for this year's event, with the Public Library organizing a special socially-distanced scavenger hunt and other activities to encourage youth participation.

Using the "Trees of Library Park" map, participants in the scavenger hunt searched through over 77 trees and 21 tree species in the block of the library. Categories to find included "a tall green tree that points up" such as the library's Italian Cypress and "a tree whose roots are showing" like the library's famous Moreton Bay Fig tree. Those who completed all eight categories were rewarded with a pack of seeds, giving them the opportunity to grow their own tree at home.

The City's Public Services Manager Maida Wong credited this year's event as an opportunity to both promote the library's newly updated "Trees of Library Park" map and encourage community members to learn more about the diversity of South Pasadena's own greenery and its important relationship to the Earth.

"Most people notice the giant Moreton Bay Fig and spend time climbing around its roots, but they may not be as aware of the many other kinds of trees. We're

hoping that the community will take time to learn more about the different trees and will come to appreciate them more," Wong said.

In past years, the South Pasadena Library has celebrated Earth Day in weeklong events packed with student art exhibitions, sustainable garden tours, and e-waste drop offs in collaboration with other local organizations like South Pasadena Beautiful and Athens Services.

Despite the decline in available activities for Earth Day compared to previous years, the library is continuing to offer its large collection focused on ecological and environmental topics on its digital book lending platform, Overdrive, and also gave out a Flower Garden craft kit for its regular Thursday "Take and Make Craft Kit."

"Many of the books on [the library's environmental resources list] include small and big ways that community members can contribute to caring for our Earth," Wong said. "I believe that it's essential for youth to be aware of environmental issues, as each generation needs to take care of our collective home. Everything on the Earth is connected, so in order to have clear air to breathe and clean water to drink, everyone has to do their part."

Listen & watch

- [So Hot Right Now](#) (podcast)
- [How To Save A Planet](#) (podcast)
- [Chasing Coral](#) (documentary)
- [Our Planet](#) (docuseries)

Environmental activism

Disheartened by the rapid dangers climate change has inflicted on the globe, local resident and activist Cheryl Auger has adapted her lifestyle to be more environmentally sustainable in her home and town.

At home, she invested in a carbon emission-free biodigester from Israel as a birthday present for herself. This biodigester repurposes her everyday food waste by converting it into methane gas and fertilizer, which Auger and her family utilize for cooking and growing their garden.

"Right now over 30 percent of our waste is organic and a lot of that comes from our food waste," Auger said. "We put everything in our biodigester; you can put cat poop in there, and most of your food waste."

Auger also helped to co-create the Ban Single Use Plastic (Ban SUP) activist group dedicated to raising awareness about the disastrous impact of plastic on all aspects of life. The organization advocates for local and state legislation to help reduce the manufacturing of single use plastics and instead create more recycling waste programs. To do this, Auger and other group members often reach out to state senators and other elected officials to discuss specific environmental legislation. They are currently working on six plastic waste-related bills.

In July 2020 during the midst of the pandemic, Auger was concerned over the

lack of bulk availability in the shutdown and was inspired to open a bulk refill store called Ban SUP Refill at 25 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena. The store carries bulk storage of most everyday items like shampoo, oats, and coffee that customers can purchase and refill in their own reusable containers. They also sell reusable products like cloth laundry bags and silicone zip bags that community members can purchase to help reduce their plastic waste.

In the spirit of Earth Day, Auger helped to organize a challenge called 12 Days of Earthmas, where residents completed environmentally-friendly challenges every day, sent in a photo, and then were entered into a raffle to win a basket with \$200 worth of items from Auger's store. Furthermore, Auger decorated Ban SUP Refill with strings of plastic waste hung from the ceiling, which blocked entry into the store to simulate fish swimming through plastic.

"You walk into the store and see what fish feel like to swim through plastic, so you get to understand how hard it is to be a fish trying to wade through things and not get caught," Auger said.

Auger commented that the most effective way for someone to be more environmentally conscious and sustainable is by growing their own food. Additionally, she encourages people to engage civically by reaching out to their legislators and demand they enact laws protecting the Earth every day, not just on April 22.



THE MASSIVE AMOUNT OF PLASTIC WASTE caused by the pandemic inspired activist Cheryl Auger to found Ban SUP Refill in Pasadena.

THE TIGER

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STAFF EDITORIAL

OPINION



Communication is the answer

Women should not direct all communication in heterosexual relationships.

Femininity is not the opposite of masculinity. To provide an analogy, the two are similar to lightness and darkness in the sense that darkness is just the absence of light. Femininity and masculinity are both good traits to have but in some cases one is more appropriate than the other.

Emotional suppression, avoiding vulnerability, and the embodiment of “protector” are all features that characterize traditional masculinity in western society. However, in a romantic relationship, one needs to exude the typically feminine traits of emotional openness and honesty. This is when masculinity becomes toxic: When femininity is discouraged in men, they’re forced to exude masculinity in all situations, even when it’s inappropriate.

To be fair, the same issues arise for femininity in women. Women are pressured to be feminine all the time, meaning that they aren’t socially permitted to be the protective or dominant partner in a relationship.

This causes women to often feel overpowered by their male partner, as well as causes men to feel obligated to take on that protectorate role.

In heterosexual relationship, women are stuck between a rock and a hard place: They are tasked with the full responsibility of finding the perfect middle ground between changing their relationship for the better and accepting their partner for who they are, which is an impossible feat when there is little communication from the end of their male partner.

Because of a lack of communication, on one end, if women try too hard to change their partner, it’s the “fix your man” trope, which is illustrated by uncomfortable questionnaire sessions and forcing their partner into areas of emotional intimacy that they are not yet comfortable, exclusive from the confines of toxic masculinity.

On the other end, in an attempt to accept their partner for who they are, the pillars of a healthy relationship — most notably communication and growth — are sacrificed and women may lose their identity in the process of being an unwavering supporter of their male partner.

They gaslight themselves and second guess their desires, all in an attempt to maintain their partner’s personhood, but in the process, sacrifice their own.

The issues that both the man and the woman face in the relationship launch them into an endless of emotional distress in which their needs directly refute the needs of their partner.

Yet, all of this boils down to communication, a typically feminine trait. Honest communication is key to a healthy relationship. This includes expressing emotions and opinions, all of which rely on vulnerability — a trait that is heavily discouraged in men rendering these standardly masculine traits to be toxic.

It really shouldn’t be the job of the woman to figure out how to properly communicate with their significant other in order for the relationship to properly function. When toxic masculinity actively discourages communication from the male end, women are left in the dark of what to do.

This isn’t the fault of women in these typical dynamics of heterosexual relationships. It isn’t their fault that they turn to the “fix you man” trope or gaslight themselves. How would they even know when they weren’t even aware of how their partner felt in the first place?

Honesty in a relationship is something that should not be confronted about. It’s something that should be a given, no matter how uncomfortable it may be. Toxic masculinity should not be worked around.

Boos & Bravos

Tiger’s cheers and jeers for the month of APRIL

BOOS

BOO to the random cloudy weather. I live in Southern California for a reason.

BOO to the girls gatekeeping Hot Girl Summer. Megan would be SO disappointed in you.

BOO to in-person classes. Now I have to look my teacher in the eyes and tell them I didn’t do my work. These masks don’t protect me from disappointment.

BOO to all the colleges that charge 80k tuition to pay scandal reparations. However, we regret to inform you that we are unable to accept your offer and submit a \$700 deposit to attend your school.

BRAVOS

BRAVO to the social distancing dots on patio tables. At least they tried.

BRAVO to the free school lunches. It feels like Christmas morning every time I get to see what six new juice boxes I got.

BRAVO to the bathrooms on campus. They smell normal-ish now!

BRAVO to the corn booth returning to farmer’s market. Four dollars and dat stuff bussin’.

BRAVO to caffeine. We will grind through AP season.

Inter-grade relationships shouldn't exist

A romantic relationship between people of different grades is inevitably unhealthy and imbalanced.

STORY QUINN MANZO

ILLUSTRATION TERRY SONG

A relationship between high schoolers in different grades is definitely romanticized. It feels more romantic in its subtle affront, and more chemistry-filled in comparison to a same-grade relationship. However, the reality of inter-grade relationships is uncomfortable. Dating between grades leads to an inevitable power imbalance because of a disconnect in maturity, and is ultimately not worth it.

A healthy romantic relationship requires balance above all else: balance in power, in effort, and in passion — an inter-grade relationship lacks balance entirely.

This is because high school is an era of exponential academic and emotional development. The amount of growth that happens solely in the transition from one grade to another is as if one has been seasoned by decades of trying obstacles. Identities in high school are more centered around grade instead of age because one's grade is a more accurate way to determine personality, maturity, and responsibility. For example, a 16-year-old sophomore is at a completely different stage in their life than a 16-year-old junior, despite the two partners being the same age.

This is because each grade of high school operates like a different life stage. A freshman is navigating their very first year in high school, barely finding their roots. A sophomore feels a bit more grounded than the freshman, but is facing an abrupt exacerbation in academic rigor and a generally shrinking social life. A junior is battling

the most rigorous academic year, anxiously applying to extracurriculars in order to be appealing to colleges. A senior is buried under the stress from college applications and the overwhelming nostalgia and grief as they leave the high school they put so much work into. Or, on the other hand, they're ready to leave and cut ties with their high school life, which indirectly means cutting ties with their significant other and being much less committed.

Most of these inter-grade relationships are a heterosexual relationship with the guy being in the higher grade. There is a well-known stereotype of senior boys taking advantage of ingenuous girls from the grades below, using them for their bodies and wanting an accessory that worships them. In this stereotype, the girl is stuck in an unhealthy one-sided relationship, starving for male validation she's taught to believe she needs and idolizing the grades above her. But hey, it's "cool" to date a guy in a higher grade.

It seems as though all high schoolers are aware that inter-grade relationships are taboo whether that awareness is subconscious or at the forefront of their minds. Those dating someone in a different grade often find themselves jumping to defend their relationship to friends, in an attempt to prove to them, and possibly to themselves, that their relationship is healthy, not predatory or imbalanced.

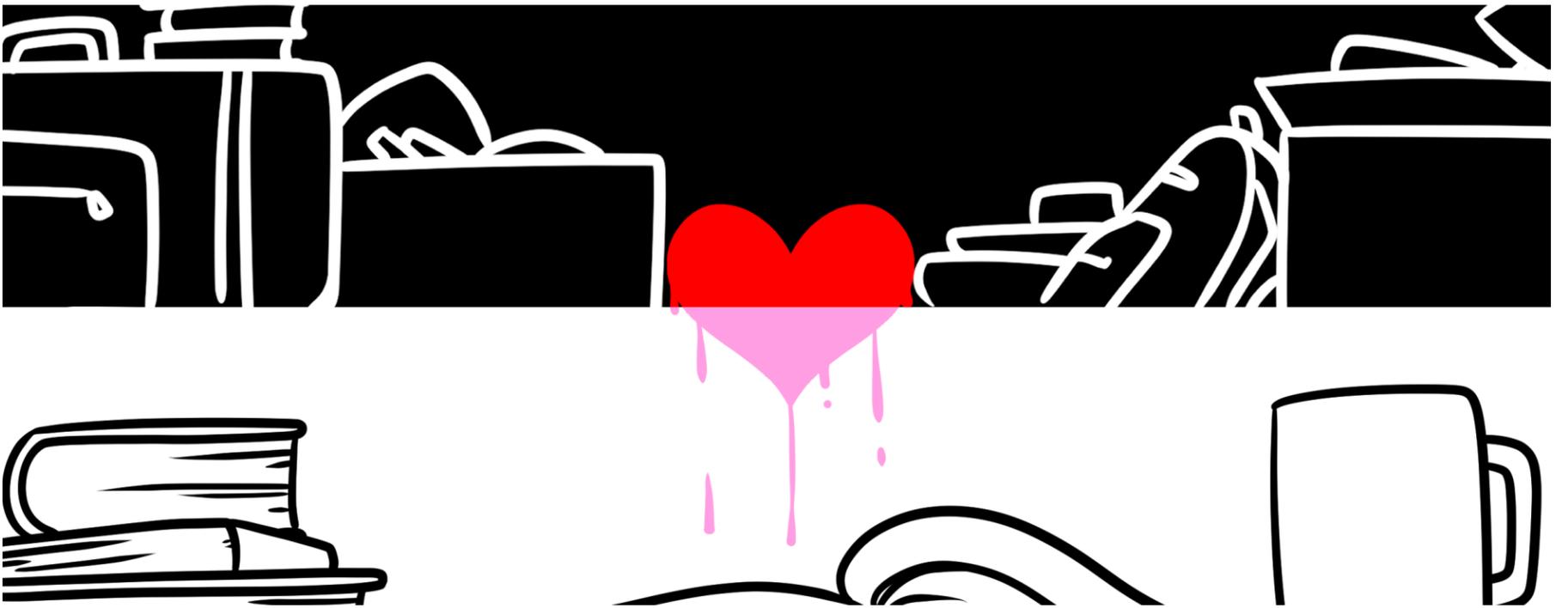
Even if the relationship is healthy (which by today's standards means non-abusive), the fact that the two are in different grades poses a different challenge, especially for those dating seniors: emotional disconnect. Regardless of the strength of the relationship or the amount of time

they may have before the next school year begins, the younger partner will always have the same nagging fear in their head: "What happens when it's time for them to leave?" That same anxious anticipation usually isn't shared by the senior, fueling an imbalance in level of care and commitment.

Significant others must be able to grow together and relate to each other. Why would any of these people want to date someone in a different grade, each in the middle of transformative experiences that they can't share? The older grades have experienced all of the hardships of the grade below them, and don't want to relive them or walk someone else through them. The younger grades are in the midst of these experiences and don't want them or their feelings to be belittled, and they're uncomfortable with the experiences that their partner holds over them, the power imbalance becoming an undeniable force that looms over their relationship.

There are a lot of inter-grade relationships at SPHS. Many of them would defend their relationships, saying that it works out for them and they're able to overcome their individual hardships. However, more often than not, inter-grade relationships are unhealthy but those in it are so consumed by it that they don't realize the circumstances — a case in which love really can make one blind. The person in the lower grade faces the most issues out of the two, but the power imbalance launches them into a cycle of self-doubt and denial.

A good inter-grade relationship is quite rare, and even then it is an exception rather than a rule: In high school, do not date anyone in a different grade.



CAT'S PLANET

CAT FLORES

Resilience is hard but it is key to being fully oneself

A few weeks ago, my girlfriend committed to college and I had a freak-out. The news made me so sad and heartbroken because it made immediate the fact that we would be leaving each other at the end of the summer to go to two different colleges.

Long before this moment, we agreed that breaking up would be the best thing for us. But in the moment, it all felt so much more real.

I couldn't picture myself at college, but now it was actually happening and I did not feel prepared. I thought that nothing could fix how sad and broken I was feeling inside.

I often acquire this mindset when something doesn't go my way or when I face something that makes me upset. I can only focus on the negative of the situation and can't stop obsessively thinking over it. It makes me physically sick and anxious and

sad to the point where I can't eat or sleep. I will get so depressed about things that I cannot function and it's so hard to pick myself back up again. I cannot see the good in things; they get blinded out by the negatives.

But after speaking to my therapist, I realized the real problem at hand: I have a pessimistic and worrisome mindset. And this is something that I need to work to fix. I can't let myself get so caught up in the negative that I can't even see the positive that is right in front of me.

After sobbing to my girlfriend about how heartbroken I was, she told me that I can't let this stop me from being happy about going to college. She told me that I have so much to look forward to ahead of me. My therapist said the same thing. And they're right.

I've been wanting to go to college the minute I stepped onto the SPHS campus. And it was finally happening. It was understandable for me to be sad — but not to the point of overlooking a major milestone I had been looking forward to for so long.

I need to develop a mindset in which I can be reasonable in order to see not only just the bad, but the good as well and to give these emotions the leverage they deserve. I also need to develop a mindset in which even if a situation is entirely bad, I can pick myself up.

I'm really scared of change and many big changes are coming in my life. I worry about the future when I need to be in the present. I need to be more adaptable and flexible. I need to develop the resilience necessary for

me to function after I endure a hardship or set back, no matter how big or small it is.

If you're like me and you find yourself focusing entirely on the bad and physically unable to pick yourself up from depressing situations in which things don't go your way, I encourage you to work on yourself because it is not a healthy way to function. Spend time with other people, talk your stuff out, and take that day off when you cannot physically get up. That's okay.

But, and this may sound really counterintuitive, but just make yourself work. Because when you allow yourself to fall into a cycle of paralyzing sadness, your situation becomes worsened by everything else that starts piling up. It just creates a positive feedback loop.

After realizing this, I decided that I would spend the time left that I have with my girlfriend actually enjoying myself instead of worrying about the future. I can be sad it will end, but still happy that it happened.

Why am I worried about a future in which we aren't together when I should be reflecting on how amazing all the time that we spent together was?

Resilience is hard, I know. Sometimes life is especially unfair. And it sucks so much. But you take away from your personhood, your own dreams, and ambitions when you let these irrational responses, responses that don't do the logical reasoning of your own brain justice, take over.

Female sexuality is not an open forum

Societal purity culture stifles a woman's confidence in her sexuality and self-expression.

STORY GEORGIA PARSONS
ILLUSTRATION ALICIA ZHANG

In Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, set in a seventeenth-century Puritan settlement, the protagonist Hester is condemned to a life of public shame after committing adultery. To repent for her crime, Hester is forced to wear a scarlet letter "A." Since Hester's time, public humiliation has taken on a new form of online harassment. Dress codes, slut shaming, and other forms of degradation function to control women and teach them to be ashamed of their sexuality.

From early ages, especially in religious contexts, women are taught to "be modest" in both the ways they dress and behave. Although modesty is likened to positive traits such as humility and unpretentiousness, my experience

in Catholic school synonymized modesty with keeping quiet, conforming to the status quo, and above all, suppressing any sort of sexual expression.

An example of this suppression in my religious education was dress codes. I remember an incredibly strict dress code being enforced on — and sometimes even off — campus, especially during middle school when many girls were going through puberty.

I remember girls who rolled their skirts up a couple centimeters too high or unbuttoned their shirts a little too low being sent to the office, sometimes even being yelled at in the hallways by teachers. These experiences created a culture of fear and humiliation, and taught me and many of my peers that women's bodies and the way women present them were things to be ashamed of.

What confused me even more was the fact that both schools I went to pushed a message of women's empowerment, offering special coding and robotics programs to push girls into STEM, all while enforcing harsh dress code policies that were anything but empowering.

I always wondered why I was allowed to assert myself in these situations, but was forced to keep my mouth shut when it came to the way I dressed, wore makeup, or who I was allowed to like.

All of these policies that controlled my early teenage years were enacted under the guise of "respecting myself," however I never felt that my wants or feelings were respected by my superiors. After learning more, I realized that this suppression of women's sexuality was just another way male power structures controlled my life, even if men weren't directly involved in these restrictive and dated policies.

Controlling the way I was allowed to dress essentially took power away from me, the most harmful manifestation of this control being the limitation or full on prohibition of women's reproductive healthcare. Just days ago, Idaho became the second state in America in a week to adopt the "Heartbeat Bill," a law that bars most abortions at the onset of a fetal heartbeat that can begin as early as six weeks. This near-ban on abortion is sexual suppression in its worst form because it criminalizes a woman's right over her body.

Although this control over women's sexuality is a cultural issue, we need to recognize the ways individuals can participate in this culture, whether that's through slut shaming or other forms of harassment in order to foster positive change.



On first love: The beach is all I could ever want and need

STORY AMBER CHEN
ILLUSTRATION TARRY SONG

Hotel del Coronado felt like "A Supposedly Fun Thing [I'd] Never Do Again."

I spent Wednesday and Thursday of spring break there, off the coast of San Diego. Most of my stay was spent eating overpriced food on the Sun Deck and trying to avoid other spring breakers (many of whom weren't wearing a mask). I basked in the glory of having successfully hidden my stick and pokes on the second day. The beach felt nice: the water was cold and it felt like I was receding with the tide. And as I was moved back and forth, I tried to convince myself that as long as I had the beach, I wouldn't need my boyfriend.

There's a certain superficiality that undermines all high school relationships. It's a language of insistent trivialness, driven by a temporary nature and an imminent end. Those who flood social media with lock emojis, pictures of themselves mid-kiss with matching outfits, and references to "loml" are nearly always scoffed at for attempting to break this standard of superficiality that realizes the unlikelihood of remaining with someone throughout high school and beyond.

Yet, no matter how hard I try to maintain the mentality that equates people to experiences and myself as equally



content with and without a significant other, I can't stop myself from crying about his college departure — "if all goes to plan" — four months premature. It makes me paralyzingly sad, despite the fact that I agree with the standard conviction.

I felt really lost at Hotel del Coronado. It was more than the existential dread that accompanies visits to isolated areas of leisure like Disneyland or Waikiki Beach. I spent the days before spending too much time with him and losing myself a little bit too much. My trip turned into an exhausting focus on distracting myself — a big struggle to avoid the possibility that maybe this boy has too much leverage on my emotions.

My mind often spirals into the following: He would love someone with bigger breasts more, someone less

attached, someone content with being disposable, someone less insecure and more supportive of video games. I suppose this happens because I am a teenage girl and "everything feels like the end of the world." Everything feels unfairly amplified against the better judgement of logical brain, when all you want to be is perfect and genuinely content with superficiality at the same time. You want to be perfect enough to mean something more to him, but also perfect enough to not care about whether you mean something to him or not. Adhere to the standards.

And then I take a step back and confront the fact that I am only 16. Perfection is out of the question. But damn these standards and damn these circumstances. Just give me the beach without Hotel del Coronado and I promise I will never be sad again.

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Loneliness: Exploring Identity

STORY ADAM KWOH, QUINN MANZO,
GEORGIA PARSONS, & MATTHEW TSAI
PAGE TALULLA CHOW & MADDIE YOO
ILLUSTRATIONS TERRY SONG



Effects of Loneliness

As SPHS reopened for the first time since March 2020, students were finally able to return to a relatively normal high school experience. However, in-person learning has come with a bevy of unforeseen awkward situations. One thing is certain: COVID-19 has transformed the landscape of social interactions for years to come.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **mental health-related emergency department visits in 2020** for those aged 12-17 increased approximately 31 percent from the previous year. Almost every individual has felt the toll of this extended period of loneliness: lack of academic motivation, temporary feelings of depression or anxiety, and difficulty communicating.

Even though in-person interaction has returned, SPHS social worker Natasha Prime believes that there's still a long road to recovery. She states that many students are out of practice in social situations, and the longer the isolation continues, the harder it will become for people to reconnect.

While Zooms, FaceTimes, and online games have provided some much-needed respite, teen workers from Teen Line, an L.A. support hotline, believe that nothing can replace that in-person experience.

"The differences between loneliness and being alone have been blended together, and now because of the past year they seem to come hand in hand," a Teen Line Listener said. "When the Zoom meetings have ended and our phones and TVs are turned off, we are completely alone... As much as we can use our technology, we are still physically alone and can't change that."

Still, Prime remains hopeful that this year of personal struggles can propel teenagers to a safer, healthier, and happier place.

"I'm hopeful that the memory of isolation will... push young people to get out of their comfort zone and meet new people, take chances, try new things, and do things because they like them and not just for how they will look on college apps," Prime said. "[I hold we can all maintain] greater awareness of health and safety, of the importance of good relationships/friendships, the desire for meaningful connections and living life to the fullest."

Quarantine introspection

Anonymous Student Experiences

"I realized I was bisexual and I don't think that would have really happened, at least when it did if we didn't have this alone time."

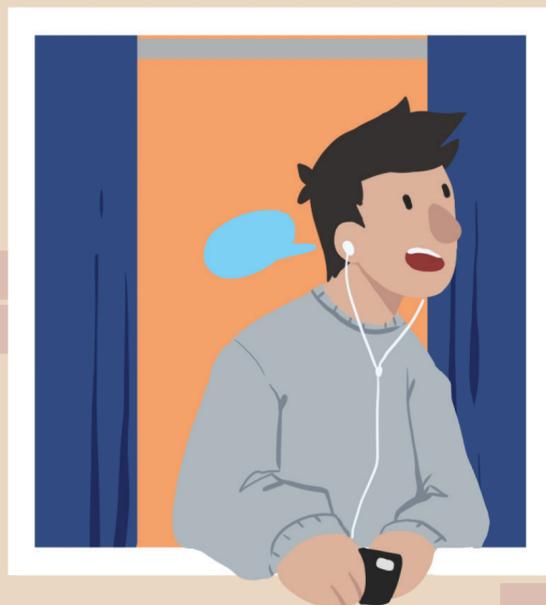
"It's been difficult as I've had a lot more time to myself to overthink everything I do and find more insecurities in myself. My self-esteem has dropped tremendously."

"Though I don't have depression, I had a lot of temporary 'symptoms' during this time like being sad for no specific reason, feeling lethargic, etc."

"I've gained a lot more self-confidence and gotten a better sense of who I am away from other people's influence."

"It has been so difficult; my mental health isn't in a good place right now. I often find myself really unmotivated."

"Coming from a person who doesn't necessarily thrive off of being with people, I have actually come to terms with my anxieties and depression and I think it's made me better in the sense that I can be more myself without the stress of being a bother or embarrassment."



"More alone time was nice at the beginning, giving more time for self-reflection, but later it just started bringing more anxiety and self-doubt because I just started to compare myself with everyone else and how they were doing in quarantine."



"I've been taking more time to myself and discovering my inner peace. I've finally realized my true passions, my thoughts, my secrets, and what I want to do in my future."

Choosing self-discovery

Loneliness often acts as a barrier to growth in relationships for most young and sprouting high schoolers. However, for SPHS Class of 2020 alumna Chiara Mathews, seeking isolation in the unfamiliarity of Europe during her gap year has been a transformative experience, stimulating development in her most important relationship: that with herself.

"Being alone with my own mind was one of the best things that's ever happened to me. Learning to be alone with my mind in silence is the ultimate freedom," Mathews said. "I've learned so much about my capacity and what my limits are when I'm on my own."

Mathews stayed five months in Italy, working as an au pair, and also met up with other short-term trippers to travel to Florence on the weekends. She has also lived in a hostel in England, sheltering with people from all different walks of life. Though so many new experiences were exciting for Mathews, the learning curve to life in isolation hit hard.

"Once [you] hit the seventh or eighth month mark, you start getting tired. You get tired of being alone and you get tired about not being able to lean on anyone or relax. You're constantly living with strangers [and] you're constantly expending energy on learning," Mathews said. "Sometimes I have days where I don't want to do anything and all I want to do is hop on a flight and get back home."

After graduating from high school, Mathews never originally planned to take a gap year, even applying to and being accepted by many universities. For Mathews, the idea of traveling alone to another country was both thrilling and an ultimate personal challenge.

"Being alone in silence was something that I just couldn't handle," Mathews said. "[But] being in my gap year and in a way being forced to confront that was a really good way to learn and trust myself. It can be really scary but when you just do it and it works out, you can gain a lot of confidence."

Mathews' isolated journey of self-discovery has led her to her next destination: the University of England, which she will be attending beginning in September 2021. Though she recognizes a gap year is a privilege and isn't necessarily the right path for everyone, Mathews hopes that others will more seriously consider the benefits of loneliness in their context.

"Before you go to university and spend another four years in a classroom just go out into the world," Mathews said. "You'll learn so much about yourself, about other people, and about other cultures. And that's going to be so useful for the rest of my life."



FEATURE



Women studies the dramatic mundane

Photographer Nadia Lee Cohen's pictures of Americana are striking.

STORY GEORGIA PARSONS
ILLUSTRATION DAVID SOHN

A crinkled paper grocery bag lies upside down in an empty parking lot. A Redbox DVD rental stand flickers in the distance next to a couple of Glacier water machines. Although only an image, one can imagine the lyrical chirp of crickets, the gentle whirr of the water machine, and maybe an occasional car passing by.

The subject of the image — a woman wearing little else but a pink bathrobe and an oddly-placed peroxide blonde wig — stares pensively at an object in the distance, illuminated by the fluorescent red glow of a Vons sign. The image in question is “Vons,” captured by photographer Nadia Lee Cohen.

“Vons” is the perfect introduction to Cohen’s body of work. It encapsulates many of the themes she touches on in her work such as femininity and hyperconsumerism — but above all the image has an incredibly complex narrative, a narrative that distinguishes Cohen from her peers. When I stare at “Vons,” I can’t help but imagine all the millions of circumstances that led the protagonist to this very moment, and I keep coming back to the picture because there’s something new to notice each time.

Cohen’s work evokes a deep sense of nostalgia, perhaps because of the 50’s and 60’s themes she draws on. Yet, her work does not feel driven by nostalgia. Instead, it revitalizes vintage aesthetics by adding a relevant, modern feel. This is likely because of her subjects. Cohen states that she likes to use normal, “imperfect” people in her photographs.

In fact, in a beauty-pageant-themed editorial, each of her subjects had some obvious “imperfection,” whether it be a unibrow, crooked teeth, or an oddly-shaped nose. The culture in 50s and 60s postwar America was a culture that demanded conformity, and Cohen rebels against this idea by rejecting ideas of perfection and modesty.

Despite American culture being a very central theme in her work, Cohen is actually not from America. Born in a small town in the countryside of England, Cohen cites the works of Harmony Korine, Stanley Kubrick, and David

Lynch as her initial photographic inspirations. In fact, a particular scene from *The Shining* inspired her portrait “American Nightmare,” which received the National Gallery, London’s Taylor Wessing Portrait prize, helping fund her trip to America.

Although these themes are present throughout much of her work, the photographs included in her recently published book *Women* explores the beauty in mundanity. Inspired by 60s and 70s motifs with a touch of Old Hollywood glamour, Cohen poses her models casually in domestic settings. Despite the plain backdrop of these portraits, all possess a dramatic flair, from the theatrical lighting, to the gaudy makeup, or to the fact that most of her models are at least partially nude.

Another striking aspect of the images featured in *Women* is their many layers. Each image elicits a strong reaction upon first looking at it, whether that be shock, joy, or disgust. However, under all the layers of emotion in her images is often a strong sense of melancholy, maybe even some nostalgia.

In one image, a woman sits breastfeeding her baby at a kitchen table. The 70s mod-esque kitchen is perfectly decorated, the woman’s hair and makeup perfectly manicured. Despite all the glamour that surrounds her, the woman stares into the distance with a glazed look over her eyes. She looks exhausted, and probably is.

The multidimensionality of her subjects contributes to the overarching theme of *Women*: the ambiguity of humankind. In *Women*, Cohen blurs the lines between what is beautiful, unsettling, and gross. In “Portia, Inland Empire” a woman in heavy makeup and a suit jacket stands plainly, yet the atmosphere is so sterile, it feels as if all the air had been sucked out of the room leaving the viewer almost unnerved.

Cohen’s *Women* could not have come at a better time. At a time where women’s bodies are so heavily censored on social media, *Women* is a breath of fresh air. To see women posed casually in the nude is a reminder that our bodies are nothing to be ashamed of, in fact, they are something to celebrate. The images in *Women* make me incredibly proud to be a woman, whatever that may mean.

Kim’s Convenience

KIMBERLY
HSUEH



Coping and cutting my hair

Take one step at a time. This is what I didn’t do when I attempted to break out of a depressed state.

For weeks, I was plagued with self-deprecating thoughts, managing to convince myself that I was truly incapable of doing anything. I reclined in bed and spent hours on my phone. While doing so, my worries began to exponentially expand, as my pile of tasks grew larger. As an expert procrastinator, I always completed my work before the due date. But, there was no sense of accomplishment, only dissatisfaction. This cycle repeated and my mood only dwindled.

During this period of time, I don’t recall smiling. All I wanted to do was hide in my room. My parents were fed up with my attitude and angrily retorted that my behavior was translated onto them.

“Act happier,” they said.

Establishing guilt was a method commonly used in my youth, so hearing them ask me to fake happiness for their own sake was triggering. The urge to tumble out of the car, like how Jeannette does in *Glass Castle*, was tempting, but I bottled my anger and disbelief once more, and sarcastically smiled. I would take the challenge.

I experimented with several coping mechanisms and began with cutting my hair. I would spend hours in my bathroom, sectioning and trimming my hair. The length slowly shortened and my mood slowly brightened. To me, cutting the ends of my hair felt like I was releasing the heavy thoughts that crowded my mind. However, this feeling was short lived and every time I felt a negative emotion, I would grab my scissors and cut.

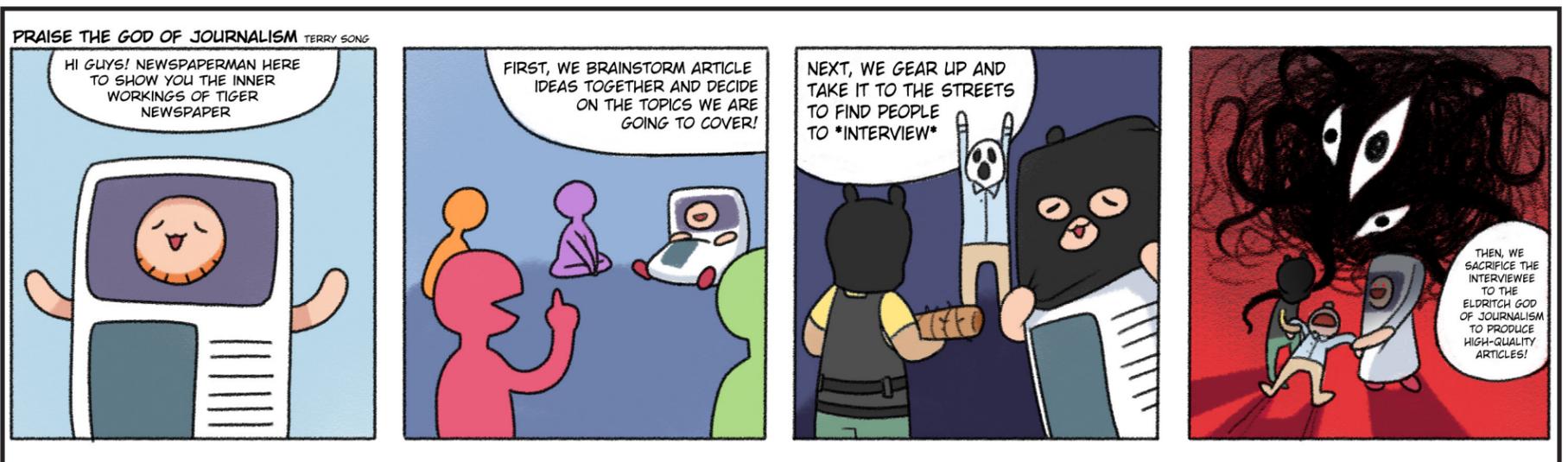
Soon, I lost my patience and angrily snipped. The unevenness prompted me to cut more and the mistake became more prominent and unfixable. Why did I think cutting my hair would magically fix all my problems?

I realized that it wasn’t the result that I was looking forward to: It was the act of being in control. I can change the style of my hair to how I want it; I am my own person, so why am I letting the events of and people in my life control me?

I can’t suddenly act happier, but I can self-reflect and self-correct. I still cut my hair and procrastinate, but I have forced negative thinking out of my life. For every mishap that happens, I think about the experience I obtained and the effort that was put into it. No matter what happens, my life is in my control and I don’t need people to tell me otherwise.

Obviously, this motivation does not sustain itself for consecutive days. I still have my lows, laying in bed and dozing off during class.

But, I know that I can always start over the next day, week, or even month. Easing into a better headspace takes patience and the best thing to do is take one step at a time.



Asian American TV shows expose cultural divides

STORY KAHLEN MIAO
ILLUSTRATION DAVID SOHN

Over the past few years, many Asian American TV shows and movies such as *Crazy Rich Asians*, *Fresh off the Boat*, *Kim's Convenience*, and *The Farewell* have gained decent popularity. These shows and movies often feel uncomfortable to watch, as while they don't ever feel wrong or inaccurate, they never resonate with me either.

As a first generation American-Born Chinese person, it's hard to come to terms with the fact that a lot of my discomfort with this media is most likely because of internalized racism. Hearing the accents and arguments about being forced to become a doctor or lawyer is an all too familiar scene. However, it's more than just small anecdotes that remind me of my Asian American-ness.

These shows and movies frequently center the narrative around "confronting the Asian American identity," making a character come to terms with the split of their American and Asian identity. This confrontation becomes the driving force of a whole character, similar to Billi from *The Farewell*, who fails to understand why her family would keep her grandmother's sickness a secret because Americans didn't. While it makes sense in a movie for a character to want to confront such a major point in their lives, it's not realistic to the everyday experience of an Asian American.

Confronting the complexities of Asian American identity and the cultural divides that might come with them is heavy and defining, but it's not a conflict that plays a major part in everyday decision shows and movies present it to. Identity struggles become unrealistic and often causes the target audience to see issues in areas where there were none. While I may encounter inner conflict sometimes, this media makes me feel like I'll eventually have to make a final decision about how I want to present my identity when I really don't.



Despite being reality TV, Shows like *Bling Empire* that use being Asian as a personality trait face a similar issue. The show's stars breezily explain away their gossip, drama, and complicated family dynamics with a light sweep of their perfectly coiffed hair, saying "It's because we're Asian." While there is nothing inherently wrong with these dynamics, the "It's because we're Asian" explanation gets baked into the emperors and emperesses of *Bling Empire*, resulting in loose caricatures whose senses of humor and questionable decision making skills are attributed not to their wealth, but to their Asian-ness.

This is an oversimplification of what an Asian identity means and how it manifests uniquely in different people. It also raises questions and quiet, internal paranoia about being "too Asian," resulting in a one-dimensional show starring a cast of flat characters that is ultimately defeatist in its goal of Asian representation.

This showcase of Asian-ness and the constant reminder of the cultural divide I feel is probably why I prefer to watch animes or Korean dramas more. They showcase parts of a culture that I'm familiar with and feature Asian characters, but their being Asian isn't their entire personality trait and center conflict. It just happens to be an Asian, who may struggle with an occasional identity crisis, trying to achieve a goal that isn't centered around their Asian-ness.

Although it's great to see TV focusing on Asian-American stories, it gets overwhelming when that's the only type of representation that is being put out. It undermines multidimensionality and reduces the identity of Asian-Americans to racial and cultural experiences. There can be stories about Asians that don't relentlessly remind their audience about how Asian the main character and in turn how Asian the audience is.

Nostalgia in media is necessary in a time period where the future teems with uncertainty

STORY SAM GROTENSTEIN
ILLUSTRATION ALICIA ZHANG

Charlie Kaufman's 2020 film *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* was one of the most disturbing pieces of media of the last decade. It starts with Jake, a man in a relationship that is seemingly on its last legs, going to visit his elderly parents with his girlfriend.

As the film unfolds, the audience is presented with brief, non-sequitur scenes of an elderly janitor in what looks like a high school watching old movies and lingering in the back of the rehearsals for the school's production of *Oklahoma!*. It slowly dawns on the audience that Jack, seemingly the protagonist of the story, is a fictional character created by the Janitor, who is in the midst of an intense internal struggle over whether or not to take his own life.

Jack represents a life that the Janitor wishes he lived, a life that almost subconsciously becomes increasingly dominated by the media that he consumes. The rom-coms that the Janitor watches and the books he has read become defining moments in the relationship between Jack and his equally imaginary girlfriend.

This comes to a head in the final scene in which Jack and the Janitor, now one and the same, put on a show of

Oklahoma!, before following a cartoon pig — literally a mixture of reality and the media he has consumed — to his eventual suicide.

The Janitor's desperate line of reasoning, that if he consumes enough media he will eventually be what he eats, hints at a line of collective reasoning that extends beyond a confusing Kaufman film. What the Janitor does is not far from a contemporary obsession with nostalgia, an obsession that has resulted in something of a cultural stagnation. The three highest-grossing movies of this year have been *Godzilla vs. King Kong* (a remake), *Tom and Jerry* (a reboot), and *Raya and the Last Dragon* (arguably Disney-Pixar's most derivative film yet).

The Billboard Top 40 is led right now by Dua-Lipa's "Future Nostalgia," a throwback to 70's disco tracks, followed by the Foo Fighters newest album *Medicine at Midnight*, which is just more Foo Fighters.

This isn't even the end though, as the top ten has three separate archive albums of old and unreleased tracks from Queen, Taylor Swift, and Fleetwood Mac. Needless to say, this trend of repetition flows into every industry, whether it be fashion, television, or even video games.

Of course, repetition or nostalgia aren't new phenomena. Idolizing past periods of hypothesized progress and

cultural revolution is a long standing tradition, illustrated by the fact that the word nostalgia itself is almost 500 years old. Moreover, ubiquitous nostalgia isn't new either. The promise of most fascist regimes is the restoration of an idealized version of the state — Hitler didn't just want to make Germany great, he wanted to make Germany great again.

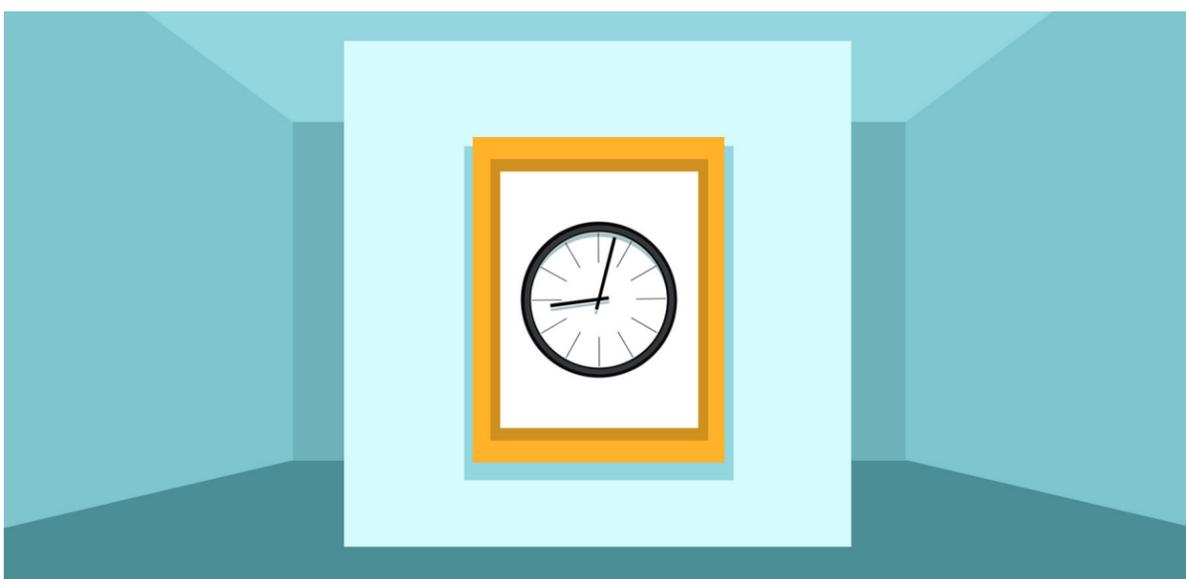
The nostalgia of today is far less pointed than the nostalgia of the past. While *Dazed and Confused* uses 70's nostalgia to comment on our seemingly insatiable desire to relive generations prior, *Stranger Things* is set in the 80's because the 80's is an aesthetic. The same can be said for the mindless retreads of old properties mentioned above: nostalgia seemingly for the sake of nostalgia because it feels as if any time and any place would be better than here and now.

Nostalgia doesn't end with the media. It has increasingly become pick and choose to adopt aesthetics of past generations to form our character. People adopt styles of dress, musical taste, and even cultural attitudes from generations prior.

This is almost necessary as it can feel as if the 2010s to 2020s have almost nothing to offer in terms of cultural movements. If asked to describe what a song from the 80's sounded like, the answer would be relatively obvious. If asked to describe what a song from the 2010s to 2020s sounds like, not even a look back at the aforementioned Billboard Top 40 could produce a coherent answer.

This is in large part because the way people, especially young people, experience time today is almost entirely unprecedented. It's not too ludicrous to claim that Gen-Z (youths, people under the age of 25, whatever people want to call it) is the first generation in a long time that has not been promised a future.

With the lingering threat of global warming being barely addressed in global politics combined with a gig economy built on the increasing inaccessibility of higher education, the narrative of "go to a good school and get a job" is becoming more and more unattainable by the minute. This isn't to complain about the trials and tribulations of being born in the 21st century, but rather to suggest that as it becomes harder to picture tomorrow, the more society loses a grasp of the historical moment. Much like the Janitor, a future may not be guaranteed, but at least, media reminds everyone that there was once a past.



Reminiscing: *Fearless* (Taylor's Version)

STORY HAELEE KIM

ILLUSTRATION ALICIA ZHANG

I first listened to *Fearless* out of an old battered CD from the library, playing it on the stereo on long rides home. I would belt at the top of my lungs to “Fearless” and “You Belong with Me.” The scratched disk made its appearance known during my listens of track 11, “Forever and Always,” as the song started with a little hiccup of distorted audio.

I eschewed listening to “Fifteen,” Swift’s raw confessions of her friend Abigail that made me feel like I was intruding, and “The Best Day” always made me want to cry. These are some of the minute details that characterize my experiences with this album, but revisiting it through the new *Taylor’s Version* evokes both familiar and old feelings within me.

In my opinion, out of all of Swift’s albums, *Fearless* always exuded the most “high school” vibes, especially lyrically in songs like “You Belong With Me” and “Fifteen.” Nonetheless, I listened to this album the most before high school, so there was a certain detachment.

Even as I enjoyed the songs, I was not truly able to relate with the messages, and another part of me believed it to be too tropey. It was hard to apply the imagery in the songs to my own life, which looked drastically different from Swift’s, both real and within her music videos.

I did not realize how much of a granular perspective that was. Now, as I am on the cusp of graduating from high school, this album ironically feels like a completely different experience.

Whereas I could only see the smaller details before, now I could see the whole picture. The messages of young love that I had taken at face value belied the wisdom and, for better or for worse, the triumphs and travails of teenage angst that Swift had imparted into the album.

Pre-high school, this was not something I could see. Now though, a little older and hopefully a little wiser, I understand the universal feelings of confusion and vulnerability that mark most people our age, unable to



understand why or how we are supposed to deal with these emotions. It’s an encapsulation of youth, in a sense.

Swift has always been able to capture these feelings so well, and everything feels more poignant with the more matured outlook to her voice and artistry. As the listener, I am able to omnisciently look back at my high school years from where I am now, grounded in the present.

This makes it easier to appreciate how much I’ve grown, and I feel like I understand myself better. I can tug on my old lines of thought, remembering all the times when I was unable to imagine a self beyond the catastrophized renderings I’d made of myself.

It was hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel then, but lines like “and when you’re 15, don’t forget to look before you fall” color my introspection with clarity.

I’m 18 now, three years too late for these prescribed words, but they have never made as much sense as they do now.

These moody epiphanies aside, the songs “From The Vault,” a collection of never-before-seen songs released as part of *Taylor’s Version*, are a joy to listen to.

People always talk about how they want the old country Taylor back, but I enjoy seeing the new places she takes her music and how she evolves as an artist.

That being said, it was exciting and I was a bit gleeful as I pressed play on the album, feeling like I was in middle school again without the angst. “Mr. Perfectly Fine” and “Untouchable” have been repeats on my playlist, two utterly different songs but both comforting to listen to, reminding me what the magic of Taylor Swift is.

K-Pop is competitive, intense, but also a legitimate genre



STORY KAHLEN MIAO

ILLUSTRATION ALICIA ZHANG

In 2017, BTS was the first K-pop group to be nominated for the Billboard Music Awards’s Top Social Artist, marking that K-pop was growing in the West and is part of what is known as the Hallyu wave, or Korean Wave — the rise of Korean culture in the West. And while K-pop has rapidly grown in popularity over the last few years in the west, the Western music industry continues to resist it because of its unfamiliarity.

The K-pop industry is intensely competitive in a way that just isn’t seen in American music. Yes, awards exist and so does charting, but most, or at least the creatively optimistic, might hope that there is still K-pop Idols perform on music shows every time they have a “comeback” (when they release a new single or album) and compete with other groups who also have had a recent “comeback.” This drive of competitiveness is incredibly foreign to the West, where winning awards and breaking records is not nearly as ingrained in the culture.

Not only is the K-pop industry highly competitive, but management companies have an unusual amount of control over their artists. Many K-pop idols go through a trainee system that teaches them skills essential for being not only an artist, but an idol.

This likely contributes to the American non-K-pop fan narrative that K-pop is, in essence, a game. They fail to take the industry and its artists seriously, often boiling them down to manufactured idols for young teenage girls. The music is written off as fake because of the industry’s inherent vapidness as a corporate entity interested in making large sums of money by producing music that engages an audience.

The audience the industry is engaging are K-pop stans who have a large presence on Twitter and always seem to be promoting their idols. From an outside perspective, stans seem to promote their idols at the expense of other artists and feed into the constant competition. Like the rest of K-pop, stans are generalized, in this case as toxic, when in reality it’s only a tiny portion of them doing so.

The K-pop industries’ hyper-corporatism and seemingly vice-like grip on artists is a recurring point of criticism. This isn’t false. K-pop likely wouldn’t have been able to balloon into a multi-billion dollar industry without a corporately puppeteered pulse on what is profitable, but it’s hard to believe that men in suits making hits is behind an American aversion to K-pop. That would be ironic.

Something more fundamental and ingrained than stylish anti-capitalism swims just below a general apprehension or hostility towards the genre. After all, Western artists

as One Direction, Britney Spears, and Taylor Swift have also faced issues of mistreatment by their management.

The American music industry resists any perceived similarities to K-pop because of its inherent foreignness. Most K-pop stans are just as invested in the lives and personalities of their idols as they are their music, something that’s just not as familiar with American artists. K-pop idols live in a sphere of being unrelatable while also relying on their relatability to connect with their fans and audience. The high intensity environment of constantly catering to fans and the socially conservative norms of South Korea is difficult to handle and creates conflict with the less socially conservative American audiences. Idols create a certain image that is seen as manufactured to American audiences in order to please their socially conservative Korean audience.

Despite the K-pop industry’s hyper-competitiveness, intensely controlling management, and a socially conservative audience, it’s success, in both profitability and cultural influence, is undeniable. K-Pop, toxic or not, has tremendous social capital, which even American musicians have taken advantage of to connect with a wider and more diverse audience. It’s valid to dislike K-pop and feel a certain contempt towards the genre, but it’s important to explore those feelings because the conflict might run deeper than just the music.

TAAGLAA: Shopping in L.A.

TIGER'S AWESOME ADVENTURES IN THE GREATER LOS ANGELES

STORY SAM GROTENSTEIN
PHOTOS SEAN JIN

Los Angeles is a sprawling city. From Highland Park to Santa Monica, there is a wide range of locals, cultures, and walks of life that could suit almost anybody's desires. Despite the diversity found across L.A., the one unifying factor is consumerism.

From the stores that line the sunny beaches of Venice to the copy-and-paste tourist shops that loom ever present over Hollywood Boulevard, there is no shortage of things to buy. Because of this, finding stores that suit individual proclivities as a consumer can be a Herculean task, and this is especially true for fashion. Aware of all of this, I set out on a humid Tuesday afternoon, wholly determined to find the best fashion marketplaces in the greater Los Angeles area.

My first stop was Dover Street Market, an outlet known internationally for high-end fashion in the Los Angeles Arts District. Upon getting off the train at Union Station, the first hurdle in my journey was a local meth-head, who insisted that I was hiding meth from him. Having no meth to offer, I continued to the treacherous two-mile walk from Union Station to Dover Street.

On the way, I passed some of the usual L.A. sights and sounds: A two-block line for a juice bar, the owner of an incredibly high-end coffee shop beating back a homeless man with a broomstick, and a local punk band sitting by the side of the road, who I sat down with for a quick respite from my never-ending journey. The band was called Bella-Larson and the Scene Kids, and they offered me a vital piece of advice that changed the trajectory of my quest.

"Things in L.A. are very expensive," band member Rex Lethal said. "And nobody has any money."

This point was further emphasized as I was initially shocked at the \$170 price tag on a set of five buttons. Browsing the endless collections of Rick Owens and Maison Margiela, it appeared that Lethal was painfully right, so I thought to set my sights on something a little more affordable.

My next stop was Silverlake's Goodwill bins, which is an excellent location to buy large quantities of clothes for obscenely low amounts of money. While there, I was greeted with the usual dichotomy of Goodwill customers: people genuinely looking for nice clothes to buy and upper-middle class white teenagers buying clothes in bulk to list on their Depops. The realization that I fit more into the latter category than the former was not easy.

Still in the spirit of thrifting, I decided that my final destination should be Melrose and Fairfax, the vintage capital of the western world. My journey there was once again packed with excitement, as I won three quarters and a Clipper lighter after shooting dice with some kindly old men on the Red Line train.



SHOPPING IN LOS ANGELES is to come face-to-face with pure, unadulterated consumerism overtaking a city that is becoming less and less hospitable for its inhabitants.

Then, I sat down to wait for my next bus, and it had only been five minutes when a large man dressed in a latex Batman suit began to harass me, so I was genuinely ecstatic when my bus arrived.

Melrose and Fairfax was, as always, an absolute delight. The usual filth of areas surrounding Hollywood could easily be ignored here, as the large crowds of loud individuals with designer bags interspersed with tourists and Hasidic Jews is absolutely a sight to behold.

I made a point to visit a number of well-curated vintage shops, but before taking my first step inside of Wasteland Vintage, I was stopped by a rabbi, who asked me if I was Jewish, then proceeded to bar mitzvah me.

Wasteland, as well as most other vintage stores in the Melrose and Fairfax area, is significantly more expensive than the average thrift store, in exchange for the promise of better curation. This was mostly true, and I ended up buying a Lynard Skinard shirt, only to realize days later that it featured a Confederate skeleton proudly riding an old-school motorcycle.

Though I had less clothes than I had set out to buy, I feel that I still truly had the definitive L.A. experience. As previously mentioned, L.A. does really have something for everyone, but that's not the whole story.

Taking away every designer clothes outlet and thrift store, L.A. is a wild sea of absurdity that sets the stage for day-to-day living. While this may seem trivial, L.A. is meant to be experienced in a car. It is a city that is built from the ground up, to be looked at by tourists and eager consumers from behind a protective pane of glass, which is emphasized by its sprawling nature and borderline unusable public transit.

People are not supposed to have to stop and think about the coffee store owner fighting back a homeless person with a broom, so when they do, they are confronted by an uncomfortable reality.

L.A. isn't made for the people who live in it, the people who have to get up every day and go to work in it; it's made for the consumer, who can block out the uncomfortable reality in an endless quest to buy more clothes — like me.



THERE IS NO TRUER WAY to see L.A. — a city that is at its shiniest from behind a car window — than by foot.

SPORTS

Ruth Schmidt: Finding family on the ice rink

STORY EDDIE ZHOU
PHOTO OSCAR WALSH

Sophomore Ruth Schmidt didn't need much time to discover her passion. Introduced to the ice rink when she was just 3 years old and playing ice hockey by age 5, Schmidt soon found herself at home. In the 10 years she has played ever since, Schmidt has worked to push past gender boundaries while developing a tight bond between her teammates.

Schmidt's first experiences with hockey came while watching her brother's hockey practices, where she quickly realized her desire to follow in his footsteps. Although originally a figure skater, Schmidt found herself more drawn to the physical and intense nature of hockey.

"I enjoy how fast-paced the game is," Schmidt said. "Unlike many other sports, there is never a dull moment in hockey, and you always have to be thinking about what you and everyone around you are going to do next."

Although Schmidt enjoyed the experience that playing hockey presented, many other girls her age did not. She often was the only girl on her team, and while her teammates were mostly inclusive, she encountered a few who reverted to gender stereotypes by doubting Schmidt's athletic abilities. However, she didn't let any of this deter her from her passion, as she channeled her will and determination to push beyond the boundaries of what she was used to.

"Since hockey is such a male-dominated sport, I grew up playing with and against boys," Schmidt said. "Because of this, playing hockey has forced me to become comfortable with being uncomfortable and therefore a lot more willing to step out of my comfort zone and try new things."



SCHMIDT IS CURRENTLY ATTENDING THE USA HOCKEY NATIONALS with her team, the Anaheim Lady Ducks, from Wednesday, April 28 through Sunday, May 2.

As Schmidt progressed through the age groups at her club, the Anaheim Lady Ducks, she found herself playing less with boys and more with other girls who shared a similar passion for the sport as herself. Spurred by her teammates' willingness to push one another to do their best, Schmidt was able to elevate her game to the next level, as she formed a close bond with and deep in-game understanding of the players around her.

"My teammates have always been my main motivators to continue to play hockey all of these years because of how much we all push each other to become better every day," Schmidt said. "Having a super close team this last year really helped all of us on the ice with keeping each other accountable and encouraging each other when things weren't going our way during games."

Motivated by this connection with her teammates, Schmidt would soon experience more and more success on the ice: her team won two state championships,

a district championship, consistently competes in nationals, and is named the most successful girls hockey program in the Western United States. However, the bond with her teammates that had contributed to much of their team's achievements began to become less limited to their time at the rink. As Schmidt and her teammates grew stronger on the ice, their friendships off the ice strengthened as well.

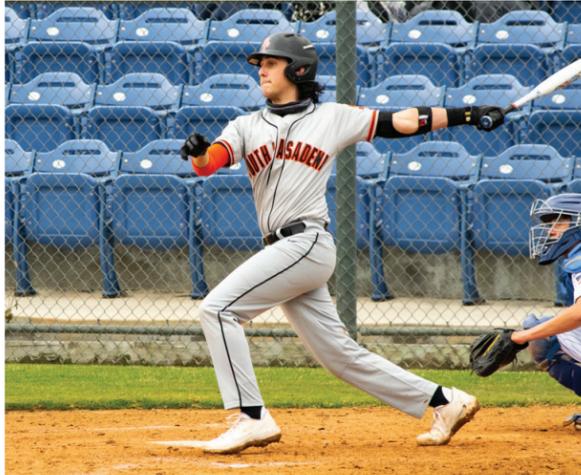
"Hockey is a team sport, and with any team sports, I feel like there is a different type of bond that you have with teammates as opposed to friends from outside of sports just because of the constant time we spend together both on and off the ice," Schmidt said. "Off the ice, even through COVID, with limited hours to spend together and safety precautions, we found ways to spend time together."

Schmidt hopes to lead her team to a national championship in her final few years with the club, and ultimately, go on to earn a college hockey scholarship.

Tiger's Media Gallery: The staff's best personal pieces

Tiger's design and photo teams have pulled together some of their pieces from the month of April.

PHOTOS KATELYN HERNANDEZ, ELLA JAYASEKERA, OSCAR WALSH, & SOPHIE YEUNG ILLUSTRATION TERRY SONG



Season Two Sports Check-ins

STORY ELLIE CAMPBELL, KAHLEN MIAO, QUINN MANZO, & ZOE SCHLAAK ILLUSTRATIONS NICHOLAS FORMAN

After taking a year-long pause in athletic competitions due to coronavirus, winter and spring sports were unsure of the future of their seasons. As restrictions have eased, South Pasadena High School sports teams have returned cautiously, but with full force. Tiger's writers checked in on a few of season two sports' progress during their condensed season.



Boys Soccer

Boys soccer is still on the hunt for the Rio Hondo League title, as their record currently lies at 3-2-1. A rough past few games against Temple City and Monrovia have shown that improved communication is vital to mend their struggling offensive line. Senior captain **Caleb Lee** anchors the team with his key scoring as a forward, which helps maintain their average three goals per game. The Tigers have three remaining games in the shortened season and they have the opportunity to earn revenge on previously lost and tied games against Temple City, Monrovia, and La Cañada.



Girls Soccer

Girls soccer is performing better than they have in previous years due to new coaching staff and an influx in underclassmen players, which now make up half of the 23 person team. The team currently ranks second in the Rio Hondo League with four wins, zero losses, and two draws. With help from senior goalkeeper **Andrea Zarazua**, the Tigers have been able to hold a strong defensive unit that has only conceded three goals through six games. The future looks bright for the team as they plan to play two more league matches, and hopefully finish off the season undefeated.

Baseball

After squeezing out a 4-3 win against San Marino in the final inning, baseball sits in fourth place in the Rio Hondo League halfway through the year. In their three regular season losses, South Pas has only lagged behind by a two-run average, and even took La Cañada to eight innings; unlike previous years, baseball has been competitive in losses. A tough schedule riddled with stiff competition lies ahead, but if the Tigers can ride the momentum of that big rival win, they could finally rise from the RHL cellar for the first time since 2013.



Softball

Softball began the season with a rocky start, and as the season progresses, their dwindling performance has left them at a 0-5 standing in league. The team was faced with few returning starters, some of which include senior third baseman **Carissa Park**. Still, some promising young prospects have emerged — freshman **Danica Sterling** displayed skill in her performance against San Marino. With an inexperienced team, the Tigers are left with ample time for improvement and hope to build a strong winning culture for future seasons.



Boys Tennis

Boys tennis started the season out slow with a 16-2 loss against both La Cañada and Temple City. However, they managed to straighten up their game with two 13-5 victories against Maranatha Village Christain in two non-league games. The Tigers defeated San Marino in their final league match, concluding their season with a final record of 1-2 in league and 3-2 overall. Sophomore singles player **Finn McMillian** was a bright spot, building on his short success as a freshman last season and performing well during matches.



Girls Tennis

Girls tennis concluded the year with a final record of 1-2-0. The season was filled with up and down extremes. South Pas defeated Temple City, 16-2, at home, but fell with the exact same score to La Cañada and San Marino. Though the season was short-lived, a few players sustained an impressive performance: Juniors and doubles players **Ava Feldman** and **Stephanie Li** showcased their prowess and displayed strong performances at the net. Feldman and Li will return next year to lead back to Rio Hondo League dominance.

Boys Golf

Boys golf has made the most out of a short season. They had a trying start when they lost their first match against long-standing rival, San Marino, but quickly picked up the pace. Defeating its opponents in the next two matches, each by a considerably wide margin, the team has secured a current record of 2-1 and hope to maintain that streak at their upcoming games in the next two weeks. Led by senior **Justin Toshima**, the boys golf team hopes to finish strong at the league finals in May.



Girls Golf

This season has been momentous for the girls golf team, currently standing at a 2-0 record. The most notable match as of yet is the team's win against San Marino by a narrow five-stroke margin, marking the first victory against SPHS's rival in three years. The Tigers successful season has gotten the attention of several colleges, as many are reaching out to key players like junior **Lauren Calderon**. Ideally, the team will continue their winning streak through the Rio Hondo League Finals in May, although the event is still up in the air.



Lyla Keller: Determined to finish the race

STORY KATIE HOHMAN
PHOTO ELLA JAYASEKERA

Freshman Lyla Keller has always been fast. From the time she was a little girl, the track and field star never knew what it meant to be slow. After many years of training and competition, it is Keller's experiences as a runner that have given her the courage to take on new challenges.

The freshman started her career at an early age, joining a USA Track and Field (USATF) team in Arcadia when she was 7 years old. Immediately, she knew that track was something she was passionate about and, with the help of her coaches, gravitated towards sprinting events.

Early on, Keller had the natural determination and drive to take on new challenges — an essential trait for a competitive sport like track. Keller has been to the Junior Olympics four times, competing in the 100m, 200m, long jump, and 4x100m events. Despite the intense pressure from both audience members and coaches, she has found a sense of pride in the thrill of such a big challenge.

"My experience going to the Junior Olympics was a great feeling of accomplishment," Keller said. "You work so hard to get to the 'final stage' and when you finally get there it shows that your hard work pays off. I've got to meet so many talented people from all over that I still get to see and compete against today."

Keller would face her biggest challenge yet when she decided to try running the 80m hurdles for the first time. At the last hurdle, Keller fell hard and immediately knew something was wrong. The runner, who was determined to finish the race no matter what, picked herself up and

crossed the finish line. Later, Keller discovered that she had shattered her wrist and developed a concussion, an injury that forced her to end her season prematurely.

Keller received emergency surgery on her wrist and went through six months of physical therapy. The next season, she attempted hurdles again and is still continuing to work towards overcoming her hurdle-induced nerves. Her injury experience, despite being both painful and time consuming, has taught her that there is value in always finishing the race, even when it seems impossible.

"Getting injured was hard because it took me out for the rest of the season," Keller said. "It did teach me that the fact that I finished the race proves no matter what, it's important to continue to push through and always finish."

Now, as a member of the SPHS track team, Keller continues to find joy in running and pushing herself. Her main events are the 100m, 200m, and long jump, and she holds the SPHS record for fastest women's 100m time (12.67 seconds).

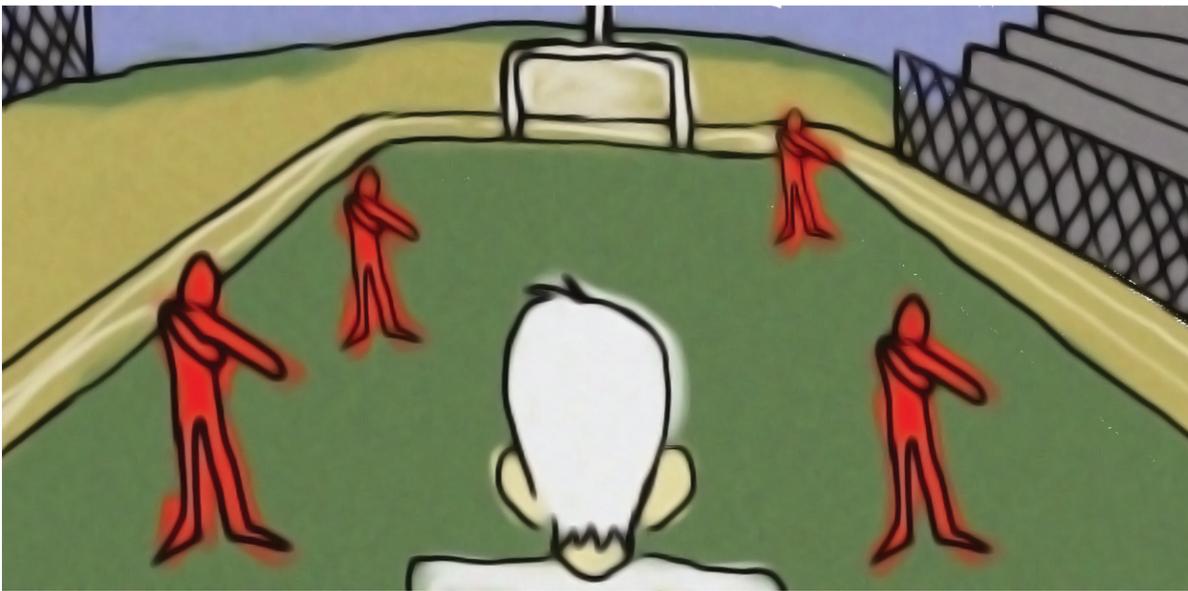
Despite being an established athlete and seasoned track veteran, Keller is facing her next set of challenges: being a freshman and new student at SPHS. After spending most of her track career with USATF, where runners are split into age groups and it is rare to interact with older athletes, Keller has been able to enjoy the change of pace that team sports provides

Keller hopes to continue running track throughout her high school and college years and her goal is to pursue a career in the sport and keep doing what she loves for as long as she possible.



SINCE SHE WAS 7 YEARS OLD, freshmen Lyla Keller has had a natural affinity for running track.

P.E. students transition from online to hybrid learning



STORY QUINN MANZO
ILLUSTRATION NICHOLAS FORMAN

Students file out onto campus during the breaks, catching up and attempting to find a bit of normalcy, and then shuffle into half-empty classrooms wearing masks. South Pasadena High School has implemented numerous changes to its schedule and class structure since its swift transition to hybrid learning on Thursday, April 15. The distance learning model of P.E. encouraged independence and overall wellness, whereas hybrid P.E. prioritizes human connection and having fun while being active.

P.E. for the distance learners is divided into two sections. A teacher leads a warm-up for the first 40 minutes of class and guides an asynchronous cardio the second half. For 40 minutes, students can choose whatever mode of exercise they want, as long as it gets their heart rate up and they document their activity.

“I do karate classes in Eagle Rock, so it’s about an eight-mile walk three times a week,” senior Isaac Blekhman said. “Through hybrid, I’m able to at least go to the P.E. field and get motivated to warm up and exercise. It’s healthy to get the blood flowing and throwing a frisbee is surprisingly fun. P.E. is one of the only classes I want to be back in in-person [learning].”

P.E. teacher Jerry Wulf prioritized safety when his classes first transitioned to the hybrid model, and also hoped P.E. would be a way for his students to relieve stress. The P.E. department chose ultimate frisbee as the first unit of hybrid learning, because it’s a fast-paced sport and it’s outdoors, eliminating any social distancing and ventilation issues. Wulf emphasized the need to be particularly careful, stating that the students are not just six, but 15 feet apart during class.

Coming back on campus has given teachers and staff a chance to meet their students face to face and get to know them better. This was a notable element for Wulf, who expressed that without a doubt, he prefers hybrid over distance learning, and wished that more students had chosen to come back on campus.

“I’d much rather be in the classroom or out on the field teaching. It’s the way [classes] should be,” Wulf said. “[There’s] nothing better than being there, and hands-on teaching, walking around and helping them, and encouraging them. It’s a lot better being in person.”

To teachers, following safety guidelines means connecting with their students beyond the screen. Wulf hopes that South Pasadena residents continue reducing COVID-19 cases so his class can continue to stay active on the field.

Junior Skye Harris elected Commissioner of Athletics

STORY KAHLEN MIAO
PHOTO SARAH LEE

Junior Skye Harris’ take on integrating mental health and athletics was what garnered tremendous support for her to become Commissioner of Athletics for the 2021-2022 school year. Harris’ goal is to improve athletic spirit after the sports hiatus in the 2020-2021 school year.

Harris’ strong background in athletics includes three years on the SPHS varsity track team. However, it wasn’t until hearing from her mother the importance of balancing mental wellness and sports in sports that inspired her to run for commissioner.

“I’ve always grown up in an athletic family and have a lot of relatives that are professional athletes,” Harris said. “Integrating mental health into [SPHS athletics] sounds amazing which made me think: ‘I’m going to run for commissioner because I want to make [SPHS athletics] as inclusive and fun for all students.’”

During her time as commissioner, Harris hopes to ensure all athletes’ opinions are properly represented to the athletic department, making sure students are heard. She also looks to consider student perspectives on how to improve athletes’ mental health at SPHS after a year in distance learning.

Harris is looking forward to seeing the stands filled up again and bringing excitement back into sports.



HARRIS AIMS TO CREATE A SPACE for students less interested in competitive sports to play recreationally.

Girls basketball defeats La Cañada for the first time in six years



TSE BREAKS SIX YEAR LOSING STREAK to La Cañada with a last minute layup that held the Spartans down 43-42.

STORY MATTHEW TSAI
PHOTO SARAH LEE

Falling out of bounds, with time running out, junior **Allysan Tse** had no other option. She flipped the ball up, watching as it glanced off the backboard and hung on the rim for what seemed like an eternity.

Only minutes before, A. Tse had failed to deliver for her team; in the closely contested league match against La Cañada on Wednesday, April 28, the star forward had just misfired on two free throws that could have put the Tigers in the lead.

“I was frustrated and upset at myself because I... could have saved us the game,” A. Tse said. “So when I heard the coach say the last play was for me, I knew I had to make up for the free throws.”

And she did. Down by one point, A. Tse received a handoff from freshman guard **Dylan Tse**, dribbled around a screen from junior forward **Alyssa Chan**. The ball teetered on the edge of the hoop as it dropped in a layup just as time expired: South Pas won, 43-42.

“Knowing that I was so close made me feel anxious and nervous,” A. Tse said. “When I went up for the layup and saw it went in, I ran to the seniors because I knew how much winning this game meant for them and the team.”

SPHS’ victory marks the first time any current player has defeated the Spartans, and the first win since 2015.

“Every year, [beating La Cañada is] our goal,” senior guard **Jenna Okohira** said. “To finally achieve that, especially since the game was close until the end, it was such an incredible feeling and super emotional, too.”

For most of the game, no one could have predicted a winner; the two sides constantly traded the lead back and forth in a gritty affair. La Cañada mostly relied on its six-foot center, who scored 18 points. However, despite the height disadvantage, A. Tse and junior forward Chan played exceptional defense, forcing the opposing center to 36 percent shooting.

“I think mainly staying in front of them and pushing them out of the key was essential,” junior forward Alyssa Chan said. “Forcing them to catch the ball on the perimeter... eliminated their shots on the inside. But also, I think Allysan and I did a great job of staying in front of them to eliminate their drives. We also tried to focus on boxing out and grabbing rebounds to make sure they didn’t get any second chance shots.”

As the game wound down with each team scoring big shot after big shot. A couple of freshmen kept South Pas’ chances alive: D. Tse flipped in a difficult lefty layup and freshman fellow guard **Jamie Kim** drilled a deep triple. But La Cañada would always respond. Then, A. Tse finished it off with the play of the game to clinch a 2-0 Rio Hondo League record.

Girls basketball will play its final match of the month at Temple City on Friday, April 30.

BUT WAIT!
There’s more...

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