

THE GAVEL O.V. HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL

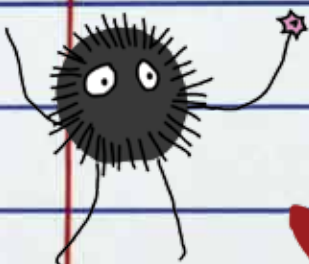


AUSTIN HAS THE BEST TACOS



earth

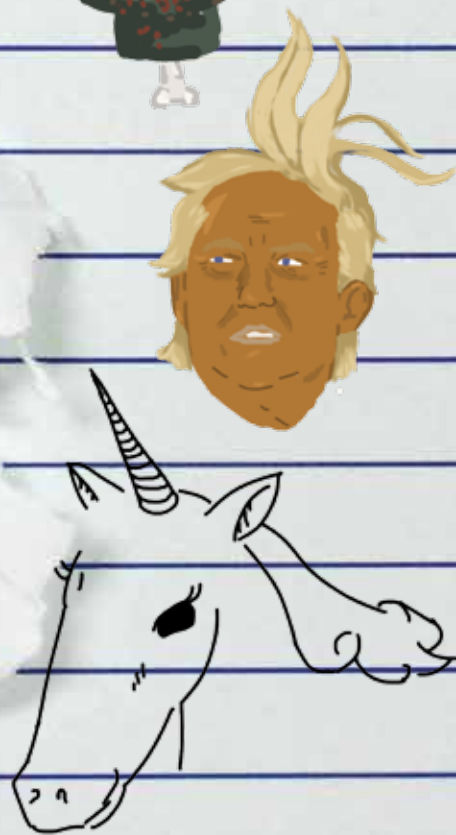
↑
FAKE NEWS



IN-N-OUT



THE TRUTH ISSUE



FRESH!



Hopes, Fears, & Real Life pg. 4

Fake News pg. 6

Beliefs, Conspiracies, & Misinformation pg. 8



Lilyana Cerda 10th

"I think people see me as outgoing or aggressive because I talk to anyone and everyone. They should know that I actually have a lot of off days where I don't want to talk and I come off as rude, when really I'm nice when you get to know me."



Joshua Garza 12th

"I believe people see me as a class clown. By making a joke out of everything that I can, they know I am very creative and intelligent. People should see me as a guy who just keeps smiling to stay positive and motivated for the road ahead."



Nathan Carreon 12th

"I feel that people perceive me as a shy person, but yet could spark up a nice conversation if we decided to talk. I want people to know that I'm just a kid in high school, just like everyone else and would love to meet new people."



Danielle Morales 9th

"I've been told that I'm really bubbly and strong and I just lift everybody up. Me personally, nobody really knows the real me. I build a wall with people and I hold my feelings inside and everything. But I don't like people seeing that, I like to show people that no matter what you're going through you can get through it."

the TRUTH about ME:

How is the truth about you different from what most people think?

by Dezaray Villarreal



Mario Estrada 10th

"I think that people see me as very intelligent or smart. People in my classes tell me that. But I think people should know that I may take in knowledge pretty well, but I also apply myself and work hard. It's not just because I'm 'smart.'"



Janessa Schuessler 11th

"I think people see me as a try-hard or nerd, someone who only cares about school and my GPA. But I think people should know that I really don't try that hard in school, I just turn in work and get involved in activities I like, such as Debate and Vines."



Audrey Cura-Faz, 11th

"I think people may see me as super quiet or mean because I have a closed-off personality, but really, I'm just super introverted. Although when you get past it, I'm easy to get along with."



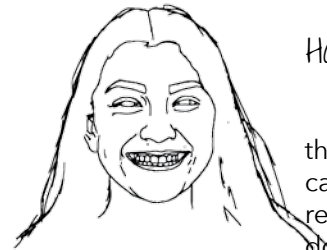
Dang Dang 12th

"I feel like people think that I'm involved in so many things, but what they don't know is that it's really time-consuming and I have to work really hard to balance them and stay on task."



Mustafa Ndichunguye 9th

"Some people think that I'm just an athlete because I'm black, but I'm really not. I have to work for it. I have to do what it takes to become an athlete. Some people also think that I'm poor because I'm from Africa. People should know that I'm very hard working and that I'm trying to have a better future because I don't want my kids to suffer like I did back then."



Harmoni Guerrero 9th

"I think people think that I'm annoying, because I talk a lot and I'm really outspoken and I don't care what people say about me. But when I'm alone and in front of a bunch of people or in front of a crowd, I get really nervous and my anxiety starts acting up."



Rene Munoz, 11th

"I think people see me as outgoing and going with the flow. The reason why is because I'm always relaxed. People should know that I'm not judging or quiet, and that I'm able to talk to anyone."



Jadeith Hessbrook 10th

"I think people see me as smart and well-put-together because I portray myself that way and I'm involved in a lot of great organizations, such as debate. What people should consider about me beneath the surface is that often times I get overwhelmed and stressed with work but I know it pays off."

THE TRUTH ISSUE

The truth is something we often feel entitled to, but don't always receive. In a society of "fake news", conspiracy theories and scandals, getting the truth isn't always easy. In this issue, we search for the truth in media, entertainment, and history. We also discover the truth behind students on campus and the things students say. We hope you find this issue as enlightening as we have found it while creating it and we hope you continue searching for the truth in every aspect of your life.

-Gavel Editors

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Cover art by Gabby Estrada depicting beliefs, theories, and popularly debated opinions that many consider to be not true.

THE GAVEL

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Letters to the editor are encouraged, and may be submitted via e-mail to matthew.singleton@nisd.net, or presented in person in room F101. The staff reserves the right to edit all letters for length and/or appropriate language or libelous content. All letters must be signed. For advertising information or rates, e-mail Matthew Singleton, or call (210) 397-7054.

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hopes,
fears
and

REAL LIFE

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS SHARE TRUE-LIFE EXPERIENCE

by **Samantha Ruvalcaba,**
Co-Editor

A seven-year-old boy is silenced by his father as they pull over to the side of the road. The boy is told not to speak Spanish under any circumstances. Puzzled, the boy sees the reflection of a police officer approaching his father's

truck in the side mirror. His father clenches the steering wheel tighter, watching each step closer the police officer takes. The boy is afraid. Not for his own life, but for his father's.

Samuel, a student on campus whose name we've changed in order to protect his identity, found out soon after this incident that his parents were undocumented. His father immigrated to the United States by himself, planning to work as much as he could so that he could have enough money to bring his family with him. Meanwhile, his mother was trying to make ends meet back at home. As all of this was being explained to seven-year-old Samuel, another thing became clear. Not only would he have to keep his family's immigration status a secret, but he had to make sure that it never got to the point where people would ask.

"My dad explained to me at that age that it was going to be different. For me it's not that bad because I'm from here, but when it comes to my parents, I'm protective. I don't want them to go back because of something stupid that I did. So I try and

avoid talking about it," Samuel said.

The "different" his father was talking about meant that Samuel wasn't going to be able to do some of the things children with legal-status parents could do. Driving wasn't an option because he could get pulled over and questioned by law enforcement. Travel was limited. More importantly, that fear he had for his father's security, or losing his dad from his life because of deportation, was never going to go away.

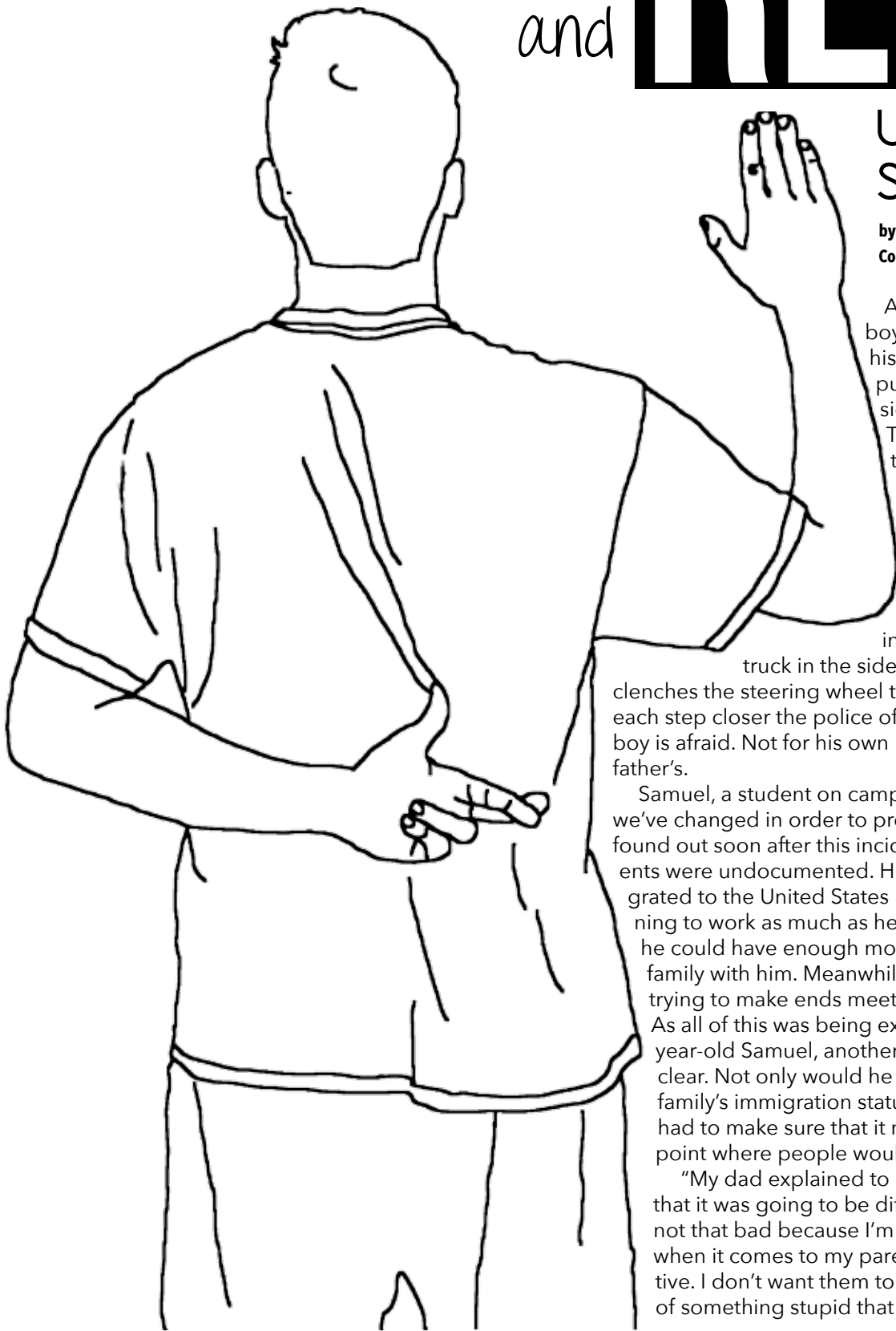
"Sometimes my dad will come home late from work like at ten or eleven and it will feel ugly not knowing what's happened, thinking he might not even be able to make it home tonight," Samuel said.

The fear of law enforcement and immigration enforcement officials has always been prominent in the undocumented community. However, Senate Bill 4 that the Texas legislature passed in March mandates local law enforcement to question anyone they pull over about their immigration status. Police can't arrest an individual for having undocumented status, but they can give the individual's name to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Like many opponents of the law, Immigration Attorney and Holmes alumnus Alex Garcia believes that local law enforcement should not be allowed to enforce immigration policies or inquire about immigration status because it can create an unsafe community.

"There are criminals who victimize people, who purposely try to victimize immigrants because they know that the immigrants are afraid and won't call the police. They don't want to call the police because they think they're going to get deported," Garcia said.

This cracking down on sanctuary cities came after the inauguration of President Donald Trump, who ran a great deal of his campaign on the proposal of building a wall to prevent immigrants from entering the country illegally and making Mexico pay for it. His win shifted the spirit of many individuals with undocumented status, including Samuel's father.

"I remember seeing the election, and my dad



swore to me, he said, 'there's no way this guy's going to win.' But then when you saw the election--how close it was--I remember seeing my dad and you could tell that he was scared," Samuel said.

Attorney and Director of Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES) Jonathan Ryan credits the fear people with undocumented status have to the recent political rhetoric coming from the Trump Administration.

"Unfortunately the rhetoric that's coming out of the federal government, the administration and our own state government poisons the relationship between immigrants, immigrant communities, and any person who represents the government. What's unfortunate about the attack on immigrant communities and their rights that's happening in our country right now is that it is in fact--and more fundamentally--a racist attack and a xenophobic attack which doesn't just pit citizens against immigrants, it actually starts to put people with one color of skin against people with another color of skin," Ryan said.

That rhetoric includes statements by current White House Chief of Staff John Kelly who made a comment back in February about young people eligible for DACA, saying they were "too afraid" or "too lazy" to sign up for DACA. Although he received criticism for these remarks, Kelly may have been right about one thing: some undocumented immigrants are afraid to seek opportunities towards citizenship.

"My dad is scared that in the process of trying to [become a citizen], immigration might take him, so he doesn't want to risk it. He wants to [become a citizen], he says the money isn't the problem, it's just the fear of actually getting sent back," Samuel said.

Felix, another student on campus whose name has also been changed to protect his identity, understands the fear of making a wrong move and getting in trouble with the authorities, resulting in the deportation of himself and his family. Like Samuel, he knew that at a young age, he had to be responsible and think about the consequences his actions might have.

"[My mom] told me, 'look we're undocumented, you really can't get in trouble. You have to be straight with everything. You have to stay in school.' I matured very quickly. I just felt like I had to be good for everything," Felix said.

Students with undocumented status have a difficult time when it comes to applying for financial aid

for college. Counselor Elizabeth Holbrook wrote her dissertation topic about students with undocumented status. Holbrook explains that students with undocumented status or DACA are limited in the colleges they can apply to because they don't have the freedom to leave the state without facing immigration at some point, and these students cannot receive Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) money.

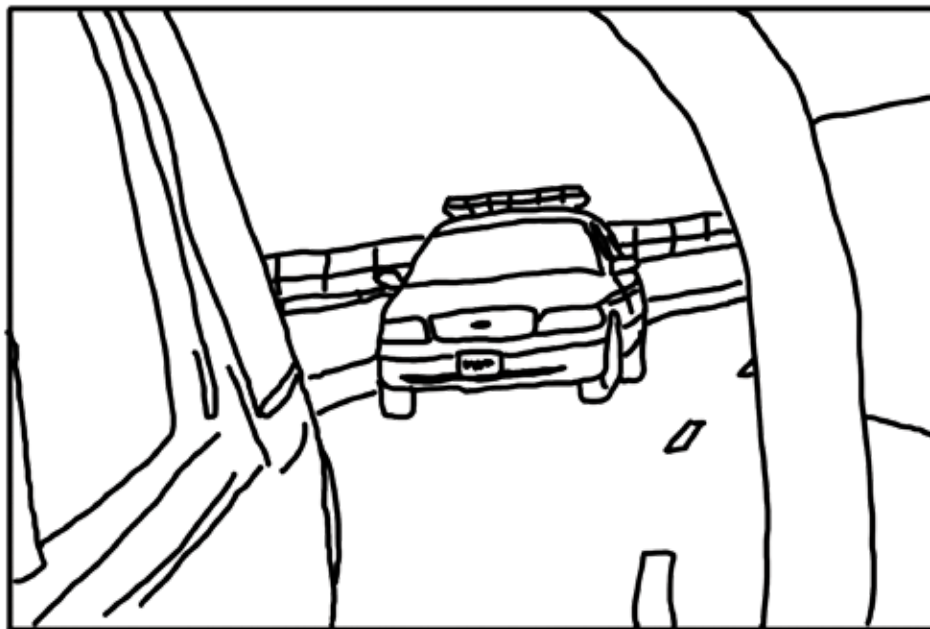
"Having undocumented or DACA status certainly affects someone's academic choices in terms of the colleges they want to attend. Not every college or university accepts applications from students who have undocumented status. They cannot receive FAFSA money, so they can't get a Pell Grant. They cannot get federal student loans. Money is a big factor in making these decisions," Holbrook said.

As a student with undocumented status, Felix is dealing with these challenges.

"You have to work twice as hard. All my classmates are getting accepted into colleges, and they are getting scholarships. I struggle just to find a scholarship or just to even complete it. I had to do TAFSA which is just for Texas. And even then, if I finish it, it's first come first

serve and a smaller pool of money," Felix said.

Like many mixed-status families, Felix and Samuel had to have a conversation with their parents about what would happen if ICE came for them one day. Samuel would have to take care of his younger siblings and assume the role of legal guardian. Felix would have to continue his life without his parents by his side. This is an option for them because they're old enough to take this responsibility. Younger children are put in the foster care system when their parents are deported. As difficult as the conversation may be, Garcia recommends that all families have a conversation about the response to



original artwork by Gabby Estrada

A child's view

Senior "Samuel" recalls feeling fear as a seven-year-old for his undocumented father who reminded him not to speak Spanish to authorities when they were pulled over for a routine traffic stop. He feared for his father's deportation and separation from the family.

"You have to work twice as hard. All my classmates are getting accepted into colleges, and they are getting scholarships. I struggle just to find a scholarship or just to even complete it."

deportation.

"I think that all families should have a plan in place. In the event that one of the parents or both parents get arrested, they should know what to do. Do they have family members or neighbors, somebody else who is very trusted that the kids will already know to call this person? I also think that they should talk to an attorney and figure out what their options would be," Garcia said.

Having parents with undocumented status has given Felix and Samuel a deeper appreciation for their parents. They've displayed a strength and will to sacrifice beyond their comprehension. Now it's their turn to return the favor.

"My mom left everything," Felix said. "If they were to get taken away, I'd want to go back [to my home country] but if I did, my mom would probably be disappointed in me because all the stuff that we did here. It'd be for nothing."

Editor's note: The names of students in this article have been changed in order to abide by the journalism ethics of minimizing harm. They are actual Holmes students who shared their stories on the condition of anonymity in order to protect themselves and/or their families from harassment or legal action.



original artwork by Gabby Estrada

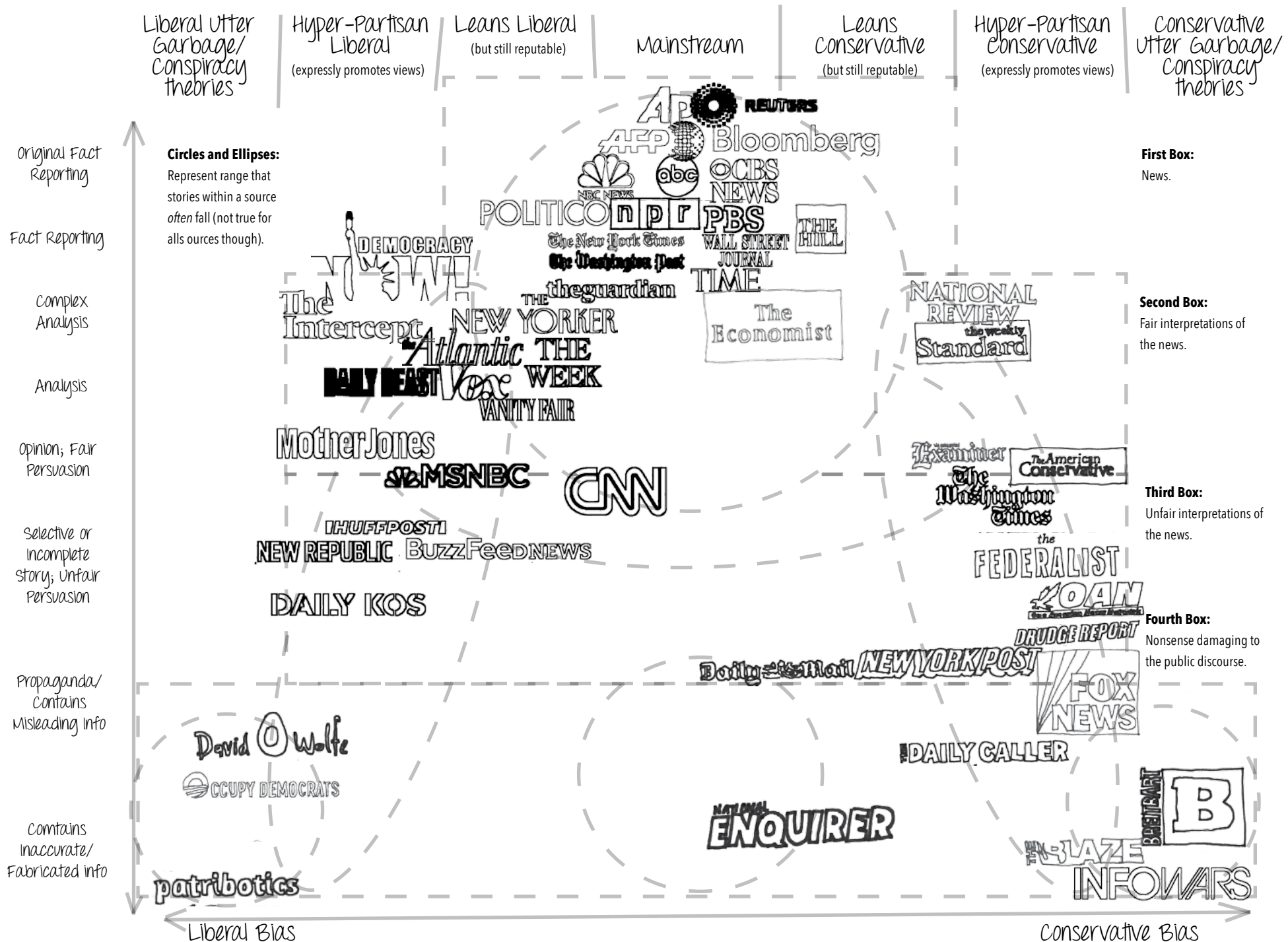
FAKE NEWS

MEDIA BIAS CHART CAN HELP DECIDE WHAT SOURCES TO TRUST OR TRASH

by Evan Alban, staff writer and Chantal Melesio, staff writer

News sources flood across the screen while we try to browse social media, and a Google search for current news will generate thousands of results from different sources. In an era where it's hard to separate fact from fiction in the news and claims of "fake news" ring out from the White House to grandma's friend's Facebook page, it's important to know who to trust to bring you the truth.

The Gavel Staff spoke with someone dedicated to sorting through that mess. Attorney-at-law Vanessa Otero gained some popularity for her research and classification of popular news sources based on their accuracy, fairness, and political bias. She displayed her research data in the chart below that spread through social media as a helpful tool for determining who to trust.



Otero herself suggests on her website bio (allgeneralizationsarefalse.com) that you should not automatically trust what someone puts on the internet, which would include charts like the one she researched and created. So the Gavel Staff asked her about how and why she chose to make the chart to better understand the reliability of her process. Here's what she said:

Q: Why did you create the chart?

A: "I noticed that during the presidential election there seemed to be a lot more people on Facebook and Twitter that were sharing news articles [from sources] they had never heard of and news articles that sounded very shady and unreliable. I was surprised to see how much there was. It was shocking how they couldn't tell the difference between high quality and low quality or something that was politically biased or unbiased."

Q: What advice would you give someone for how to figure out if something you are looking at is from a non-reliable source?

A: "Making sure something is properly sourced and that it is verified by talking to the primary source, you get supporting documentation through that. The main things to detect are spelling, grammar, whether the headline matches the story or if the picture matches the story. Another thing to look out for are extreme kinds of language in the headline, like if there's something meant to enrage people or inflame them like hyperbole and extreme adjectives. Investigating who the author or a particular source is and how long it's been around [is important] because these organizations like big newspapers and TV stations have to invest a lot of time and money on resources in order to create an audience. If you were to see a tiny website that hasn't been around for that long, those tend to be less reputable. You can always look up the source on wikipedia or the about page of the particular website and find out things like how many journalists they have, how long they've been in business and who their authors are. Once you see that they don't have any credentials, that's a red flag that they're not very reputable."

Q: What did you ultimately find out by looking closely at all of these sources in order to rank them? Who should we trust to give us the most truthful, fair news?

A: "AP (The Associated Press) and Reuters are wire services, meaning they are the ones that have thousands of journalists all over the world doing straight fact reporting and executing ethical journalistic practices like sourcing and verifying. Those kinds of organizations, their news reaches about half of the population and the reason they're able to build up [an organization like that] is because they've developed a reputation of being good news."

If you're looking to follow trustworthy news sources according to Otero's chart, follow @AP and @Reuters on Twitter, and a variety of other sources from the top tier.



Here the latest news?

**Chikin
is better than
beef!**



Ingram Park (inside and outside the mall)

"You never see curves whenever you're on a plane, you never see the earth curving on the horizon. All that is completely flat that I see. Just view how airplane pilots say that they have to have this horizontal horizon that they have to keep maintained level at all times and that horizontal horizon never goes down it just stays perfectly flat the entire time."

-Anonymous (at student's request so people wouldn't make laugh at them)

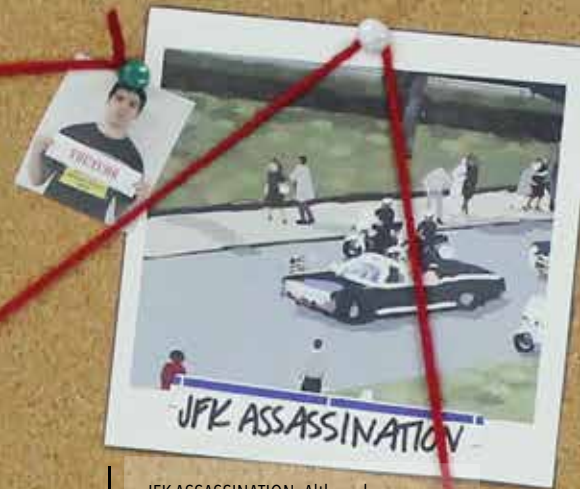
"I told my class, I put my opinion out there, that I think the world is flat, and people just laugh at me, so I just keep it to myself."



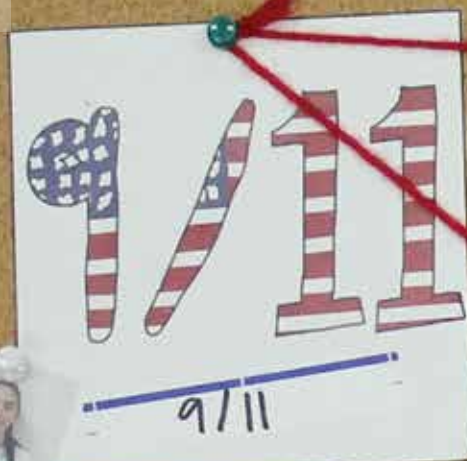
THE EARTH IS FLAT: Believers say that NASA photoshopped the round earth that we see in photos, and that the government even goes as far as faking the GPS signals that pilots use to fly around the world.

"I don't know that the conspiracies are [true,] but that's what makes [them] so interesting."

Joshua Garza 12th



JFK ASSASSINATION: Although we grew up getting told that Lee Harvey Oswald was the one (and only) person to have shot and killed late President John F. Kennedy, not everyone believes that. Theories include (1) multiple shooters and (2) an inside job.



"The government [has] done things, they are super corrupt, and I mean, why would they want to tell us stuff that they are hiding from other people? I just believe people over the corrupt government."

Elizabeth Gomez-Giles, 11th

9/11 WAS AN INSIDE JOB: It is probably very unlikely that you have not seen the unbelievable pictures of jets flying through the twin towers in NYC (the most famous of the attacks). The theory though, is that the American government was responsible for the attacks, or at least aware of them beforehand.



"What makes something more believable is how many views it has."

Leslie Nunez 12th



CRISIS ACTORS ARE HIRED AND TRAGEDIES ARE STAGED: This theory says people are hired and trained to portray victims during a disaster. In recent months, more theories have come out about the government hiring actors to play victims in different catastrophes and even at school shootings.

SUSPECT SOURCES FUEL CONSPIRACIES

It was a dark and stormy night, the wind was swarming outside. John Doe sat on the edge of his bed, balancing his laptop on his lap. He quickly became intrigued by the variety of resources he had at his fingertips; blog after blog, video after video. But just as easy as it was for the information to be readily available, the truth was easily distorted. Unfortunately, John Doe was just another victim of unreliable information on the internet.

With the explosion of social media and Youtube, more and more information is available at the fingertips of consumers. That means that people have more access to information that may be misleading or posted without regard for the truth or facts. Here are popular theories among students on campus, and why they believe them.



"What makes something believable is if I was there in person."
Jasmine Hinojosa 9th

LA LLORONA WILL TAKE KIDS WHO ARE OUT TOO LATE: Also known as the weeping woman, legend says she was a beautiful woman who, after her husband cheated on her, drowned her two children and then became so overwhelmed with grief that she roams the land looking for her children as a ghost.

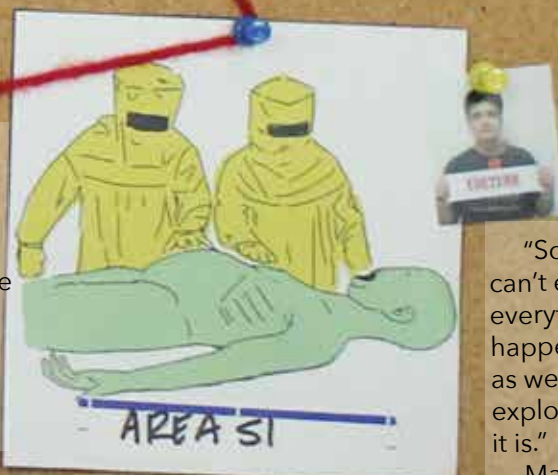


"I believe it 100 percent, I just don't think we had the technology back then to go to the moon."
Leon Fletcher 10th

THE MOON LANDING WAS FAKED: Some people believe that Neil Armstrong's "giant leap for mankind" was a hoax. They believe that the US government wanted to beat the Russians into space, so they hired a Hollywood producer to film the entire "scene."

THE GOVERNMENT IS WATCHING: The idea that someone (mostly the government) is watching or controlling your every move through TV, Propaganda, etc, which became more widely popular after the book 1984 by George Orwell was published in 1949.

"I search the topic and then see which video is more popular, which one has the most views and which one catches my eyes."
Jadeith Hessbrook 10th



"Scientists can't explain everything that happens in life as we're still exploring it as it is."
Martin Aguirre 12th

AREA 51 IS REAL AND THEY HAVE ALIENS: Theorists believe Area 51 is either (1) a secret military base that holds government secrets, or (2) a storage ground for extraterrestrials.

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE BELIEVE CONSPIRACY THEORIES

1. "Conspiracy theories appeal to people's need to feel special and unique because it gives them a sense of possessing secret knowledge."

-Social Psychology study

USAToday, "Conspiracy theories: Here's what drives people to them, no matter how wacky," by William Cummings

2. "Other studies reveal that conspiracy theories help people make sense of the world when they feel out of control, are anxious or feel powerless if their needs are threatened."

-Stephan Lewandowsky, University of Bristol professor of psychology
BBC, "The enduring appeal of conspiracy theories," by Melissa Hogenboom

3. "Individuals who grew up insecurely attached to their parents - where they experienced a negative relationship with one or both of them, also seem to be more likely to support conspiracy theories."

-a study in the Journal of Personality and Individual Differences
BBC, "The enduring appeal of conspiracy theories," by Melissa Hogenboom

4. "People don't like it when things are likely random. Randomness is more threatening than having an enemy."

-Dr. JW van Prooijen, Prof. of Social & Organizational Psychology
USAToday, "Conspiracy theories: Here's what drives people to them, no matter how wacky," by William Cummings

5. "People naturally converge on the views of those around them- in both their physical and virtual neighbourhoods."

-Zaria Gorvett, science journalist

BBC, "How to avoid falling for lies and fake news," David Robson

6. "The stronger a person believes in a conspiracy, the less likely they are to trust scientific facts."

-Stephan Lewandowsky, University of Bristol professor of psychology

BBC, "The enduring appeal of conspiracy theories," by Melissa Hogenboom

"BIG BROTHER"



NO LAUGHING MATTER

JOKES ABOUT SUICIDE TRIGGER SERIOUS ISSUES FOR ALL

by D'Mitre Dimas, Staff Writer

As the long school day ends, hundreds of tired and restless students fill the hallways. The voices of students fill the air with sighs of relief that the school day is over, but, listening more closely, something grim is being discussed. One student says, "Oh my god! He said no! I want to kill myself." Another further down the hallway says, "I forgot to do the homework, I wish I was dead."

Many students are used to hearing phrases that use suicide as a joke or exaggeration, but while for some students it's not a big deal, for those who are constantly battling with depression, it can be seen as being naive or even hurtful.

Junior Kane Sandoval sits in class and hears students constantly joke about killing themselves or telling others to do so. He, like many others, doesn't appreciate the idea of students poking fun about a problem that takes millions of teenage lives.

"In every class I hear someone say they want to kill themselves. And all anyone does is laugh; they all see it as a joke," Sandoval said. "Usually when I hear it, there's a big assignment involved and they complain and say 'kill me now'. I hear it every day, it's pretty annoying."

Another student, junior Canon Lefever, didn't see a problem with students making these jokes, but he changed his stance when a loved one of his had a close encounter with trying to take his own life.

"My boyfriend tried to kill himself. It changed my viewpoint on the whole thing," Lefever said. "It made me think that this isn't something you should look past, but something you should take seriously."

Students on campus may use the phrase just to be relatable to others in their class who constantly use it. They may not realize what they are saying can be a problem for other students.

"They may say it just to be relatable, because everyone says it, [but] they probably don't mean it. It's a trend now," Sandoval said. "It's pretty stupid when people say that, because there are some students who do feel that way, and when they hear someone joke about that, it really doesn't help their case."

English teacher Samantha Crawford believes that students use this phrase because it has become the norm. It's a topic that is joked about throughout culture, in songs, movies, in memes and on social media.

"It's something we got used to. It's something we've desensitized ourselves to, like school shootings. It happens and we know it happens, and when it does happen we care less and less," Crawford

said.

According to some professionals, like guidance counselors Elizabeth Holbrook and Maria Barrientos, the reason why students say these remarks is because they are acting out of impulse and don't really think about what they are saying.

"They are just joking and they are thinking that they may want a certain reaction out of another person which is completely inappropriate. Whether it's your peers or any of your family members, it's in poor taste to be joking like that," Barrientos said.

Crawford feels very strongly about this topic. She doesn't tolerate any sense of these remarks in her classroom, as she expresses her strong feelings towards the students in her class that say this phrase.

"I usually give them a verbal reprimand. I notice it decreases as the year continues, and they kind of get the idea. It's kind of the same as the verbal reprimand I give when people say 'oh that's gay' in my classroom. I don't tolerate that either. It's just verbal reprimand, but if it gets to the point where it's so repetitive to where my gut kicks in and says 'well maybe they're not joking', then I switch to following the standard operating procedure," Crawford said.

The procedure for teachers and administrators to follow if a student claims they want to kill themselves is that they cannot leave the student alone. They should walk the student to the counselor and the student has to stay with the counselors. Once with the counselors, they call people who need to be involved with helping the student. But counselors express it's very important for students to know if they go see a counselor they have a limit on confidentiality, which means if they deem it necessary they don't keep secrets and will tell the appropriate administrators, parents, and state agencies who can help.

"[Students who joke about suicide] are undermining the seriousness that teen suicide is right now. It's more prevalent in our society than it's been in other years, other decades and other generations. It's easier for other students to be neglected so therefore teen suicide has gone up. For a student to jokingly say that they are going to kill themselves, it undermines the diseases, illnesses, and causes of actual teen suicide," Crawford said.

Crawford believes that if teens keep joking with these suicide phrases, then society as a whole would believe that teen suicide would be considered ridiculous. It makes adults overlook those students who actually want to cause harm to themselves.

"We are trained to know the signs. We know the

steps, but it makes it very hard for us to sort out the true from the exaggerations. If that gets difficult, then how are we supposed to prevent a student from causing themselves harm?" Crawford said.

Students who are joking about this matter are confusing teachers who actually want to help students in need. And for those students who do need help, they often become cautious to get help because they may feel that everyone will take it as a joke.

"Anybody who does these types of things in a joking manner needs to know it devalues the importance for those people who are having some serious issues in their lives and they're taking up valuable time from people who need to be focused on, the students who need the help," Holbrook said. "These 'jokes' are not funny. They just aren't as funny as you may think."

For Sandoval and many others, they believe that these phrases should be discouraged and that students shouldn't say anything they don't mean, whether they are joking or not.

"I believe it should be highly discouraged. Students should find a better approach, so instead of using the phrase, 'I'm going to kill myself' they should use a different saying that's not relating to a serious topic. I wish people would realize what is morally right and wrong and to stop on their own. It shouldn't be enforced, but should be highly recommended to not say things like that, or at least apologize if you did," Sandoval said.

Crawford believes that preventing suicide is about so much more than seeing a psychiatrist or counselor and receiving pills. She thinks maybe attention should be put toward the person's surroundings instead of their mental stability.

"I think it all boils down to knowing where to get the help, understanding you're not alone, and understanding it's something you don't have to live with. For those students who have depression and they feel like the world is always going to be against them and they are never going to be happy, there is help, and I don't think they realize how much help there really is," Crawford said.

If you have any questions about suicide, or need to talk to someone about your problems, you can talk to Ms. Barrientos or Ms. Holbrook in the Holmes counseling office. Or if you would prefer talking to someone anonymously, then you can call the suicide hotline at 1-800-273-8255.



"OUR YOUTH NOW LOVE LUXURY. THEY HAVE BAD MANNERS, CONTEMPT FOR AUTHORITY; THEY SHOW DISRESPECT FOR THEIR ELDERS ...THEY CONTRADICT THEIR PARENTS ... AND TYRANNIZE THEIR TEACHERS."
— ARISTOPHANES, POET, 390 BC

KIDS TODAY...

CRITICISMS OF STUDENT CULTURE DEBATED AS FACT OR FICTION BY STUDENTS, TEACHERS

by Clara DeLaRosa, Copy Editor

regarding generation gaps with technology reflect that.

"It's just the context and the digital age that we're in right now," Hamric said. "We did not have the information available at our fingertips. When we needed to figure something out, we couldn't use Google. A lot of students these days rely heavily on having that information available to them," Hamric said.

While some teachers fight it, technology has become an important part of the school experience in more ways than one. Some schools are requiring a computer science credit in order to graduate and nearly everyone has some sort of mobile device that they are able to text and take photos on. English teacher Kathleen Kirk sees the pressure this technology puts on students that she never experienced as a student.

"There wasn't a record of things, nobody posted videos [and drama] died down faster because the evidence wasn't there. I think [drama] nowadays, lasts longer, which isn't necessarily a good thing," Kirk said.

Another factor in what is focused on in the classroom. Standardized testing has changed a lot since most teachers were in school. Starting in the 1980s, Texas legislature decided that students weren't being pressured enough to succeed, so their solution was to test them in the third, fifth, and ninth grades with no repercussions if they did not receive a passing grade. In present times, Texas students are required to take at least two standardized tests beginning in third grade. If a student does not receive a passing grade, they are allowed to retake it once before they are prohibited from graduating or passing that school year. Hamric points this out as one of the challenges that make teachers' experience when

As a light ding rings out through the quiet classroom. A student's eyes grow wide as they realize that the sound came from the cell phone in their backpack. As fear grows in the student's eyes, the teacher heads their way, storming like a lion about to get its prey. Once the teacher reaches the desk, her hand stretches out to the horrified student who reluctantly hands over the - now silent-cellphone. Then the rant from the teacher begins, "You kids these days are impossible. You can't stop looking at your cell phones. You're irresponsible. We weren't this bad when I was in school."

Students have claimed that they are burdened by the comparisons of students from an older generation to the students of recent times.

Senior Ashleigh Cunningham has experienced many in the older generations talking badly about the intelligence of her generation.

"I hear [it] almost every day of my life. I always hear, 'This generation is soft or not as great as when we were in school. They're not as smart,'" Cunningham said.

Expectations have risen for the younger generations. This generation has many more resources available to them than teachers had when they were in school. Students use and have learned to turn to these resources when they have a question, but that doesn't stop teachers from ridiculing students for their use of technology.

Math teacher James Hamric is identified by many students we talked to as open-minded regarding certain aspects of everyday life, and his comments

they were in school so different from the experience of their students.

"The biggest thing is the reliance of standardized testing," Hamric said. "Public education in general is not doing as good a job as we use to and it is not getting kids truly ready or prepared for college."

Throughout history, there have always been older individuals that looked down upon the younger generations that have come after them.

From technology to curriculum to behavior, many factors contribute to the way we value and view other generations. The generation gap isn't a new thing, and we hear echoes of the same old argument from as far back as 390 BC where Greek poet Aristophanes said, "Our youth [...] have bad manners, contempt for authority; [and] they show disrespect for their elders.

It's not a new problem, even while expectations rise higher and higher with each new generation and many students find it all too hard to handle.

"The rules are a lot more strict," Cunningham said. "People expect so much of us nowadays."



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THE 'TRUE TEST' BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

9 THINGS TO KNOW TO START ADULTING

by Gabriel Wilson, Managing Editor

Illustrated by Lucille Gradillas

For many on campus, STAAR and AP testing season is starting. While these tests can make the difference in getting your diploma when you graduate, the true tests happen after you walk the stage.

All that knowledge from calculus and world geography might help you on the tests and in college, but there's a lot you may need to know that those classes didn't quite cover.

The Gavel Staff has compiled some introductory information on some of the real-life things students will need to know in order to successfully start "adulting" and make it in the real-world.

The truth according to many students is that learning about these things might be more useful than most of the things you learned in your classes.



3 How do taxes work?

In short, taxes are the way the government pays for public services such as schools, roads and our military. Taxes come out of your paycheck determined by a W-4 form that you fill out when starting a new job. Come around Christmastime, you will be sent a W-2 form which will assist you in filling out and sending your taxes to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service). Depending on your income and other factors like whether or not you are supporting kids and how much money you make, you'll either have to pay more taxes or some of the taxes taken out of your paycheck returned to you in a refund check.

Source: <https://everfi.com/>



1 I'm graduating, what do I do next?

Heading to college? College is about discovering yourself, many change their majors until they find what feels right to them, and you can even transfer from one college to another if it's not the right one. Much like anything else in life, you will have to discover what is right for yourself. However, you have resources on campus now such as the College and Career Center, your teachers and your counselors who can offer a lot of advice and guidance on what's right for you. Start there.

Joining the workforce? There are a few things you can do beforehand in order to help yourself in the long run. If you have a specific job in mind, take electives that will give you needed knowledge and experience for the job you have in mind. Or join one of our many programs that offer job certification like auto collision, cosmetology, or computer maintenance.

Lastly, if military is on your mind there are two things you will need to train; your body and mind. It is imperative that you mentally make the commitment to the toughness you will need on your way to join the military. In order to be able to sign up for a branch, you'll need to take the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) a test that involves science, math, English and auto shop knowledge. What you score determines if you are able to join a branch as well as what job you qualify for. If needed, you can test again.

2 What's the deal with insurance?

Health, auto, life, home and renter's insurance are all insurances you have probably heard of before. Auto insurance is required by most states (including Texas) for any driver. This insures that you or other drivers will be paid for partially or fully if any accident occurs. Home and renter's insurance will protect you from paying for damages to your home, however renter's insurance does not cover the items in your home. Health insurance helps cover the cost of any and all medical expenses. This can include trips to the ER or just a visit to the doctor's office. Life Insurance, while it might be a little morbid to discuss, is important for you to make sure your family or partner will be financially protected if you were to pass away. Insurance can be paid for in monthly installments.

Source: <https://everfi.com/>



4 Rent vs Buy a home?

If looking to rent a house/apartment you would pay month by month based on a contract called a lease. Renting can be cheaper, as you are not fully responsible for maintenance. If looking to own a house, you would need a down payment and pay a monthly mortgage. There are some pros and cons: You have the flexibility to change the interior and exterior design as you wish, you can rent it out or move out whenever, gaining value on your property. However, you are also in charge of the maintenance if any problems arise. Keep in mind that the bank can foreclose on your house if you are unable to afford your mortgage.

Source: <https://everfi.com/>





5 What's the deal with "credit"?

Your credit score is a numerical rating that indicates how likely an individual is to repay their debts (student loans, credit card, car loan, home loan, etc). A low credit score can impact your ability to get other loans, open up a credit card, or being approved to rent or buy a home. This rating ranges from 300, being a very poor score, to 850 being excellent. Your score is determined largely by your payment history, type of debt and credit cards you own, and how much debt you have in relation to your income. You can boost your credit score by paying all your bills on time and using a low percentage of your total available credit.

Make sure to check your credit report yearly for accuracy or use free apps like Credit Karma to monitor your score.

You are entitled to one free official credit report each year (one from each credit bureau - for a total of 3 per year).

Notify the credit bureaus immediately if you notice any information is incorrect.



6 What are good manners?

The basic rules to follow are just be respectful. If there is someone saying something that you disagree with and you have the urge to tell them what you think, do so respectfully. Listen to what they have to say before telling them how you feel. If there is a person you ask out on a date and get declined, it is not an excuse to belittle or hate that individual. On the other hand, if they say yes, it does not give you "permission" or the "right" to treat them however you want. It is important to remember all of us are just human and that we create the idea of "manners and etiquette" as a society in order to create a semblance of order and prestige amongst ourselves.



8 How do I do laundry?

Finding a laundromat or owning a washing machine is a good place to start. Simply add your pile of clothes into the washing machine. You might want to separate your lighter colors from your darker colors, as darker clothes can stain lighter clothes in some instances.

Turn the dial for what is right for the job (heavy duty, light load, etc.) and then add any detergent according to the amount indicated on the detergent instructions and close the lid. Wait for the load to finish and you're good.

Once done, you will remove your clothes and then have the option to air dry on a clothesline, use a hair dryer if really desperate, or toss them in a drying machine. Additionally you can add a dryer sheet to freshen your style. Be careful. Drying some clothes on the hot setting can make them shrink.

7 What about a job interview?

When you're getting ready for your interview just keep these simple things in mind:

Dress appropriately, know what job you are applying for, greet the interviewer with a proper handshake, and good eye contact. If you are sitting, don't slouch, and when walking in/out do so confidently. Always use yes/no sir/ma'am, and never bring your step brother to interview as a team.

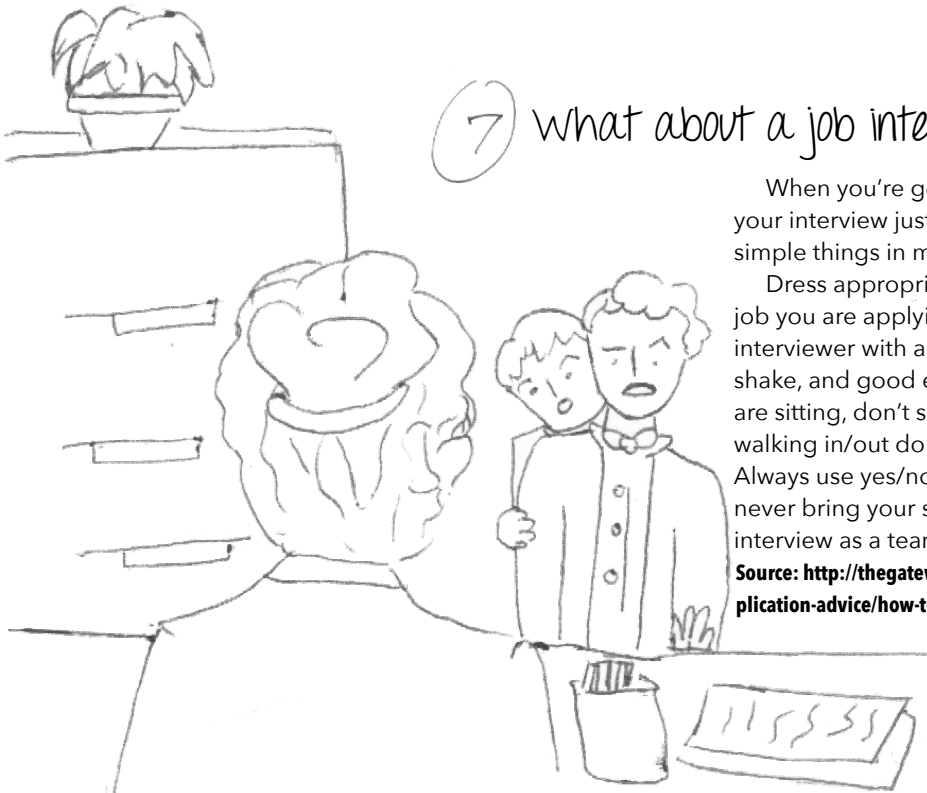
Source: <http://thegatewayonline.com/careers/application-advice/how-to-behave-in-an-interview>



9 How do I budget?

When looking to budget, one of the first things that comes to mind is the so called "50-20-30" rule. This rule is meant to help a individual easily become financially secure. The main idea is to use 50% of your income to spend on your needs, 20% on your wants, and use the 30% to set up some sort of savings account. This plan is used to insure all your financial needs such as rent or electricity bills are met, but you can also buy that new phone you wanted. Of course you need to make sure that your financial stability is secure by having money saved up come what may.

Source: <https://everfi.com/>





OPINION: ORIENTATIONS SHOULDN'T BE USED AS INSULTS, JOKES

by Krissie Ruiz, News Director

"That's gay" being used as an insult is a phrase that is totally unacceptable to use in any conversation. Many people, including myself, have used this phrase at some point carelessly as slang to describe something uncool or lame. For me, this changed when a peer of mine came up to me and told me that it was offensive, even when joking. At first, I was so confused as to why it would be offensive, when it seemed everyone used the phrase. That was careless of me. I was being thoughtless with my words and not realizing the effect it would have on the people around me.

Words carry history, history carries words. History has a few dark periods in it, where people of all kinds of beliefs and races have had to speak up about the injustice they face during their lifetime in order to make change.

The problem with the phrase "that's gay" is that it equates someone's sexual orientation to something negative. This would lead people of any community to feel as if they are being targeted, and is even more difficult for those in the LGBTQ+ community, because they still feel the pain of years of oppression and opposition trying to make them less of a human being. Students on campus may not have lived during the time when the very hateful phrase was created, but that doesn't mean that they don't still have to put up with the effects from what it was

created for originally.

It's important to start to put a filter on our mouths for phrases like these that are used on a daily basis. The phrases like this that we use are offensive and inappropriate commentary. Imagine carrying the burden of your community which has historically been shunned or oppressed, whether on the basis of race, origins, or sexual orientation, while at the same time having to put up with people making jokes or comments that carry hurt and reopen those wounds. We must think how it must feel for a person in that peculiar situation, and we really have to put ourselves in their shoes to try to understand what it must be like. Hearing the same negative comparison over and over tends to get to be too much for one person to carry on their shoulders alone in what seems the whole world at times.

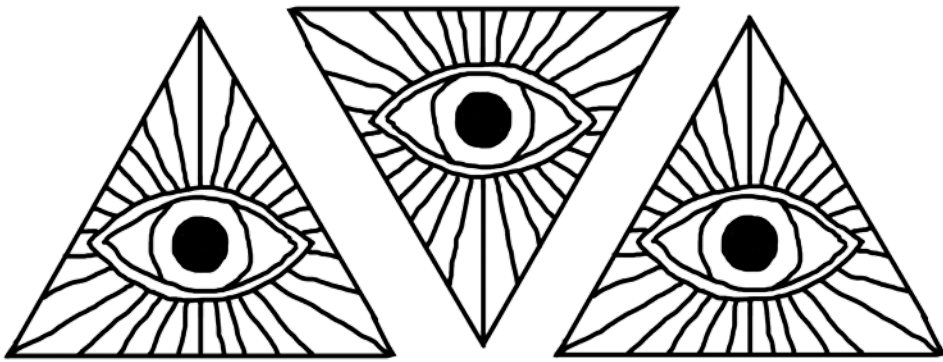
When we say 'that's gay', what exactly are we saying, and meaning to say? At first when I said it; I meant it as a way to convey that something is boring, lame, or super uncool. Without even truly understanding, I just put down an entire community. Though that was definitely not my intent, that's what it did. The fact that I didn't think about how that might feel to an LGBTQ+ friend, I'm sure caused some of my friends to feel hurt, and maybe many more without meaning too. But it not having bad intentions didn't mean I didn't still inflict pain.

I don't think I'm the only one to not think about

what I've said before I say it, and that's a major problem in today's society. It would be easy for us to let our culture become one where we can say whatever we want and face no real consequences for it and we tend to forget that words can hurt, and that people hurt too.

While, jokes are funny and fun at the time, it's important to acknowledge what is a joke and what is hate speech. People tend to get the two mixed up a lot. One of the biggest benefits of living in America is that you have freedom of speech; the ability to say what's on your mind. But that can sometimes showcase one of our biggest weakness because we forget about other people's humanity in the process.

We must become better about watching the words that come from our unfiltered mouths. It may feel impossible to simply wake up one day and decide "I'm not going to say a phrase/word that I have been saying since I was a child," and I get that. It may be a process of unlearning bad habits. What I can say is that I will continue to grow and educate myself on all types of ways the words I say or jokes I make might be filled with damaging attacks to others, and I hope others will join me. Let's start by removing "that's gay" from our vocabulary, and educating ourselves on the experiences and struggles of all people around us.



original artwork by Gabby Estrada

CONSPIRACY SEQUENCES

OPINION: CONSPIRACY THEORIES CAN CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS

by Dezaray Villarreal, Co-Editor

The Illuminati, JFK Assassination, aliens, The moon landing, and The Mandela Effect are just a few very well known conspiracy theories that I can name off the top of my head. Now these conspiracies that I just listed are a few from a very, very, very long line of conspiracies theories that are circulating through the internet, social media, and by word of mouth. Like any other person, I love to submerge myself into theories, whether that means binge-watching Netflix documentaries, or watching the latest BuzzFeed Unsolved episodes on Youtube. I guess it's the entertainment aspect and the "what-if's" that draw me and many others into conspiracy theories. But now more than ever, many are taking conspiracy theories to a whole new level and are starting to take theories based on unreliable sources as truth.

As much as I love conspiracy theories, none of these theories have ever been proven to be true, otherwise they wouldn't be called theories anymore. What has been alarming is seeing the growing amount of people that are now succumbing to these conspiracy theorists on YouTube and other media, believing they are true without any real substance or research behind where they are coming from.

A perfect example of how damaging believing and repeating these conspiracy theories can be is what happened with the Pizzagate scandal. Yes, that is the name of the scandal, which was originally a conspiracy theory surrounding then-candidate Hillary Clinton and suggesting that she was a part of a child trafficking ring that was run out of Comet Pizza in Washington, D.C..

The scandal took place just over a year ago, in

December 2016 when a man took a conspiracy circulating around the internet called 'Pizzagate' and decided that it was real and would take matters into his own hands by showing up armed to the D.C. pizza joint to free any children he thought were being held, using force and assault rifle if necessary.

This all started on social media, of course, specifically circulating around Reddit, 4Chan, and Twitter, which, right off the bat, you can see that these aren't reliable sources. As the story goes, these circulated mainly through right wing bloggers and sites talking about a 'Pizzagate theory.' Which was what Edgar Welch, the man who charged into the pizza joint with a gun, took as truth.

After Welch drove six hours to the pizzeria and charged in with his assault rifle, only to find a normal pizza place, local police in D.C. stated that no such scheme was being run by Clinton, nor were there any children being held against their will at said pizzeria. Welch has since been convicted for what he did, and apologized, admitting that he had been misled and shouldn't have believed what he saw on social media and from political extremists about the theory.

I bring up this example to show the extremes in which belief in conspiracy theories from unreliable

sources can affect people. Even when there is no real truth behind what is being claimed or "reported," they're easy to get wrapped up in, and that's exactly what happened to Welch.

Don't fall into the dark hole that are conspiracy theories. Take into account when looking at any theories or "stories" online or in the news that the sources behind where these stories are coming from are reliable and valid. How many views a video has, or how many retweets and likes is not an indication that something is true.

Now more than ever, more stories are coming out stating the most outrageous and shocking conspiracy theories, so take it all in stride and don't automatically believe everything posted pertaining to conspiracy theories. Check out sites like Politifact, Snopes, and Fact Check to verify any stories or theories circulating. Don't always believe what you read, and, in this case, before you watch that next conspiracy theory video on YouTube, consider the consequences of misinformation.



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SPORTS SHORTS

VARSITY BASEBALL

4 WINS AND 19 LOSSES

Junior pitcher Jacob Longoria unleashes a curveball from the mound against Warren High School after senior catcher Ryan Kalka called for the off-speed pitch.

VARSITY SOFTBALL

13 WINS AND 6 LOSSES

Junior pitcher Jalissa Alicea brings the ball around for a perfectly-placed pitch against a Brandeis High School batter. The Huskies lost to Brandeis making it one of only two district losses so far this season.

VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

2 WINS, 10 LOSSES, AND 3 TIES

Senior defender Ivan Santos covers the ball, gaining possession of it from an O'Connor attacker. Despite the score board, the team showed marked improvement on the field.

VARSITY GIRLS SOCCER

0 WINS AND 18 LOSSES

Sophomore goal keeper Angel Martinez looks downfield for an open teammate after collecting an opponent's goal attempt. The team had many young players like Martinez getting their first taste of varsity this season.



photo by Ricardo Ramos



photo by Nailea Rodriguez



photo by Ricardo Ramos



photo by Maria Garcia

*The above records are accurate as of 4/5/2018

COMIC RELIEF



"CAMPUS CONSPIRACY" written and illustrated by Lucille Gradillas

SHOUT OUT

The "shout out" section is dedicated to those making a positive impact on our campus, whether it be students, faculty, or organizations. We appreciate your time and dedication to making our school a better place. In this issue we would like to give a shoutout to:

- Holmes Bleacher Report Twitter account @HHS_BR run by seniors **Ethan Hageman** and **Ali Wallow**, for keeping students and faculty informed on multiple sports events, with scores and live updates.

- **Athletic Trainers**, who day in and day out support all athletic programs as well as athletes on and off the field.

- HHS/ BC National Walk Out Twitter account @HHSNatWalkOut run by senior **Ric Galvan**, The account advocates for student safety and against gun violence across the nation as well as on campus.