

## Please form your own opinions

by Hana Beach  
Humor Editor



The world is literally at our fingertips. The internet provides us with boundless information about the most trivial subjects. However, with the endless amount of information available to us, it has become harder to sort through facts and form our own opinions on relevant topics.

Our inability to understand and form genuine opinions on relevant topics has plagued our high school. Every day the hallways are filled with teenagers spewing their ideas, or rather the ideas of parents or TV commentators, to each other. Every time I overhear an intense argument over the second amendment

or an outlandish joke about the Tea Party, I become overwhelmed with a feeling of déjà vu. Then I realize that the ideas, beliefs, and even jokes of the student next to me are the same as [insert TV political jokester here] and appeared on [insert aforementioned political jokester's show here] last night.

The epidemic of teenagers expressing the views or beliefs of others is nothing new. It comes with our need to assert our knowledge on a topic. Instead of reading an article and forming an original thought on the subject many, including myself, watch television and repeat the views of others.

I was once guilty of this horrible and ignorant act. Recently, I have tried to become a more "aware" member of society. Political commentary shows are obviously one-sided. The jokes on the show, although incredibly hilarious, poke fun at only one side. These shows do not present the news in a manner that promotes critical thinking. After years of seeing world events through the skewed eyes of John Stewart and Stephen Colbert, I realized that I was becoming an incredibly dogmatic person.

It is difficult finding news that is presented in an unbiased way; however, it does exist. PBS Newshour, for example, presents the news in a factual and objective way. The show then presents two experts, one from each side, arguing in support of their own perspective.

Teenagers are impressionable. We are naive, decisive, and lazy. It is easy to be swayed one way or another. We won't go out and check our facts. "John Stewart, whatever you say goes," is the mantra of many. Fellow students, if you do decide to follow

John Stewart's side on an issue, it is important to go out, find and understand the counterargument. Go out and become an informed member of society.

Not to resort clichés, but we are the future, and we need to be informed members of society to create a better society for tomorrow. Also, adults, and more importantly, other teenagers will respect your stands on opinions.

The jokes on Real Time with Bill Maher, The Daily Show, and The Colbert Report are written by informed political junkies. They just seem strange coming from an impressionable teenager. So please guys, just become informed; it isn't that hard. You literally don't have to get off your couch to do this.



## Appreciate the people in your life

by Danielle Katz  
Editor-in-Chief



In the wake of testing season, many of us have yet to recover from the adrenaline-powered survival mode that allowed us to mentally and physically endure these past few weeks. A common result is a sort of self-centered tunnel vision in which we allow ourselves to think of other people in terms of whether or not they make our lives more difficult. We notice

people who are "in our way," or who fail to perform a service that we expect of them, but rarely do we stop to acknowledge those who provide a smooth and steady rhythm our day-to-day life. We trudge onward toward June 6, focusing on our goals and forgetting about the people who allow us to reach them.

Still, it's hard not to appreciate the people who break the monotony with an unexpected compliment or kind gesture. For many teachers, administrators, and other faculty at our school, a simple "thank you" qualifies as such. Simple and seemingly intuitive, expressing gratitude can have a powerful effect simply because doing so has become uncommon. It is an easy way to show a faculty member that you are aware of the time and effort that he or she devotes to the community and that you appreciate its impact on you. Considering how much effort the LGHS staff puts into making our experience safe, productive, and enjoyable, the minimal expenditure of energy required to thank somebody can go a really long way.

Our community has gone above and beyond to nurture us and give us access to countless opportunities, but because many of us have not known anything else, it is impossible for us to see our charmed situation for what it is. The support system in Los Gatos is so extensive that it is easy to take it for granted. School board members, crossing guards, parent volunteers, and many others put themselves in thankless positions to help improve our quality of life. Many people have

**THANK YOU!!**



become resigned to the fact that Los Gatos students see them as dispensable and obligated to provide services. After finishing an AP exam, I suddenly said a quick "thank you" to the proctor, something I had never thought to do before. She blinked at me in surprise. It struck me how monotonous proctoring exams must be; yet most students are so relieved to have finished the test that they forget that somebody else also had to sacrifice four hours of his or her morning. Here in Los Gatos, we are seldom alone. Help is always waiting around the corner or quietly assisting us in a subtle form. So, during these last few weeks before the end of the school year, let's make an effort to thank who have gotten us here.



## Do not feign your interests

by Anna Esslinger  
Humor Editor



We have all been in the situation before: you are having a conversation with people when they bring up something you have never seen, or you did not like. Either because you do not want to offend them, or because you want to share common interests with them, you lie. No, this little white lie is not going to tarnish your conscience, but lying about your interests will not help your budding friendship and is only bad for yourself.

I too am a culprit. In an attempt to seem more cultured, I have said I've seen movies I've never even heard about, read books with names I can't pronounce, and listened to bands that consist of ex-members of Saved by the Bell. After lying about these unimportant experiences, I have never come off as more interesting and only felt uncomfortable. These awkward situations have made me realize that lying about my interests does not benefit me.

What makes a situation even more uncomfortable is when people realize that you're lying. As evidenced by Jimmy Kimmel's segment, "Lie Witness News," people look ridiculous when they pretend to know about things completely foreign to them. Just as audiences snickered when people talked about how they loved the new band "Chelsea and the Clintons" at Coachella, people who listen to you lying will sneer. I remember watching Paris Hilton talk on Larry King about how during her time in jail she became a reformed Christian and read the Bible every day. When Larry King asked her what her favorite story from the Bible was, she paused for an unnecessarily long amount of time and then said that she liked them all. It was obvious to both King and the viewers that Hilton was not as devout of a Christian as she implied, which only further tarnished her image. Although both Hilton and the people shown on "Lie Witness News" thought that they were bettering their image or making themselves seem cooler, in actuality, they ended up sounding ridiculous.

It seems that people are so obsessed with matching the popular opinion that they don't realize that others do not care if people agree with their interests. If you don't find country concerts and Shoreline fun, you will not be shunned from Los Gatos High School. If you thought that Django Unchained was too violent, you will not be considered cinematically immature. And just because you did not go to that slam poetry reading does not mean you are not cultured and unintelligent. By lying about your interests, you only end up distorting other people's image of you. Being honest and expressing your opinion will not make people hate you because in reality people don't care that much about whether you like something or not.

Although the cliché "be yourself" is overused, it still has some validity. Do not pretend to like something just because other people do; it only results in the you and other people feeling uncomfortable when it is obvious that you're lying. Being truthful about what you like and what you have experienced is much simpler than an elaborate web of lies that attempt to make you look cool. A web of white lies is messy and unnecessary and only ends up harming yourself.



all photos courtesy elibrary

## TV directly affects mental health

by Lauren Finkle  
National Editor



I love TV. A lot. Maybe not as much as some of my peers, but I do adore it. When I have finished my homework or decided that procrastination is the better option, it is my go-to activity. The lights and sounds and often mild plotlines are soothing for a sleep-deprived teenager's mind. But one evening, while watching Mr. Selfridge non-stop, I began to consider that maybe TV was not as beneficial as I thought it to be.

Between homework, watching the weekly installments of the four television shows I follow, and avidly awaiting the next installments of aforementioned shows, I have little time to relax, daydream, or think productively.

The average American spends five hours a day in front of a television. That is five hours that could be spent completing a multitude of productive activities—playing a sport, practicing an instrument, reading a book, taking pictures, making dinner, etc. Five hours that could be spent doing something creative, something to further your passion.

Anything that takes up five hours of your daily life is not healthy. Putting aside any brain mush myths that are inextricably linked to TV, I am taking issue with the amount of time we let it take up in our lives. If we spent five hours mashing bananas on a daily basis, I would protest that too. I have heard the same complaint from every teenager, including myself—there simply is not enough time to get everything done. Homework, sports, friends, parties, and quiet time just do not seem to add up. However, it seems if we simply cut out TV maybe we could have the time with our friends and family that we claim we so desperately desire. We need to moderate our TV intake, open up several hours in our daily schedule, and let the creative juices flow. Maybe we can even make way for the Enlightenment, Part Two.

While taking issue with the time we give TV is an obvious reaction, there are yet more problems with watching hours of television. One journal of the American Heart Association published a study with results showing that people who watched more than four hours a day had an 80% larger risk of death from cardiovascular disease and an overall 46% higher risk of all causes of death in relation to people who watched less than two hours a day. The amount of time spent watching television is directly correlated to the amount of time spent exercising. Watching large quantities cuts down exercise time, resulting in a more sedentary lifestyle and failing health.

I suppose my stigma with TV is simply that it takes away from both our mental creativity and our physical health. Let's move away from the screen and start thinking our own thoughts. (Source: LA Times)

