

Displaying love is overrated and uncomfortable

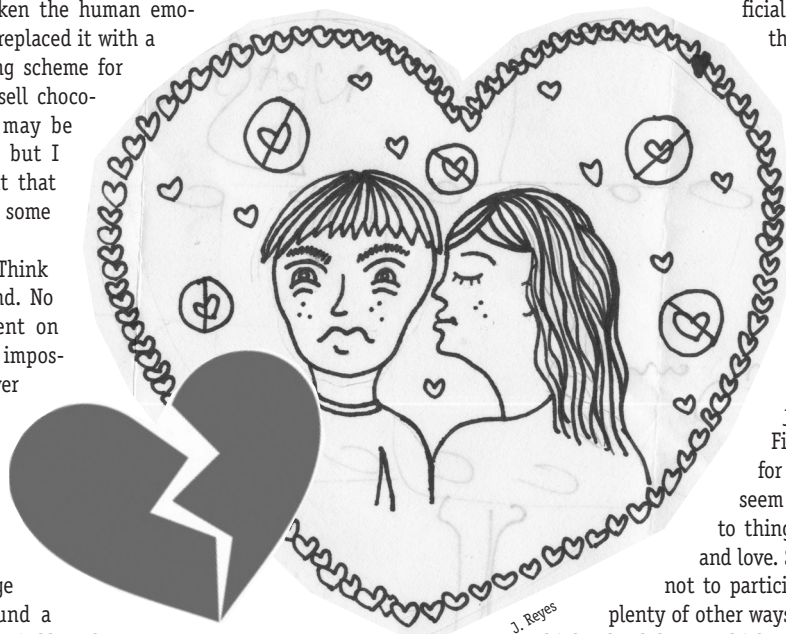
by Hyuntae Byun
News Editor



It's that time of year again. The time of year when people start asking each other out to the Sadie Hawkins' Dance. You've probably experienced this to some degree. Maybe it was you who was doing the asking or getting asked. Maybe your friend asked you to help ask out another friend. Maybe you were simply scrolling through your Facebook news feed when

you happened to come across a photo or ecstatic status update. Last month, there was a similar reaction with Valentine's Day as couples exchanged obnoxiously large boxes of chocolates or traded elaborate gifts as a method of declaring their love for each other. Even before that, there was the season of Coro proposals. Through these, and numerous other examples, it becomes glaringly evident that our society seems to hold the perspective that it's bad to be alone, and that affection is best characterized through the exchange of material goods or the staging of public events. Sure, it's impossible to deny that a thoughtful gift or large poster is adorable and uplifting, but that does not mean that in order for something to be adorable and uplifting, it must be large, expensive, or public. Coronation, Valentine's Day, and Sadie's were supposed to be happy, light-hearted events of joy and caring. However, nowadays it seems as though we misinterpret the true spirit of these holidays.

In a sense, we've broken the human emotion of affection, and replaced it with a thinly veiled marketing scheme for large corporations to sell chocolate and cards. That may be a bit of a hyperbole, but I stand by my argument that we're overemphasizing some of these events. Don't believe me? Think about this for a second. No matter where you went on Valentine's Day, it was impossible to escape the ever present pink and red cards, boxes of chocolates, and flower arrangements. Similarly, it is becoming a regular sight on campus to see large crowds thronged around a proposal, often accompanied by colorful balloons and posters. Asking somebody to a dance has almost become a larger event than the dance itself, and is often more publicized. This is problematic, as it indicates the super-

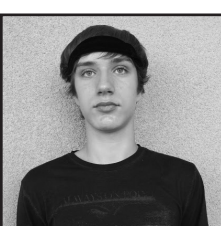


J. Reyes

ficial aspect of such events, which themselves are social gatherings intended to bring us together. There's nothing wrong with having fun with a close group of friends at organized gatherings. In fact, it's fun, refreshing, and can relieve built up stress. That being said, it is absolutely unnecessary to go overboard and blow it out of proportion. So in conclusion, I would just like to reinforce two things. First, it's superficial to do things for the sake of publicity, and yet we seem to do it anyway when it comes to things like dances, Valentine's Day, and love. Second, it's entirely permissible not to participate in such events. There are plenty of other ways to have fun besides going to a high school dance, which will most likely be awkward. Feel free to just chill at home, or do something fun with a group of friends, because in the end, these holidays and dances are supposed to be fun. Keep it casual and fun.

Troops in advertising

by Aiden Adams-Campeau
Humor Editor



Advertising is all about manipulation. Companies try to send subliminal messages through their commercials, and, when successful, these messages cause the viewer to have a positive

opinion of their product. Frequently, commercials use cute objects, such as kittens or puppies, or sexual imagery to create the positive association that ultimately leads to increased sales. However, the recent advertising trend of cashing in on American sympathy for the troops to sell products like beer and pet food should be stopped. While a certain degree of emotional manipulation is inevitable in advertising, these recent ads take advantage of the positive feelings towards those in the military in a way that is disrespectful to and shamelessly abusive of public goodwill. During the past two Super Bowls, troops were shown in two commercials and in a halftime show. Budweiser's ad in the most recent Super Bowl consisted entirely of a town celebrating the return of a soldier, a heartwarming scene that concluded with the Budweiser logo filling the screen. Jeep's 2013 commercial, entitled "Whole Again," featured quotes from Oprah about the dif-



courtesy wikicommons

ficulties of waiting for troops to come home again as scenes of military families played. In between songs during the 2014 Super Bowl halftime show, a montage of troops saying hello to their family members was shown. Even Iams, a pet food manufacturer, has gotten in on the action; in a recent ad, a pet is shown patiently waiting for its enlisted owner to return home. In all of these cases, public goodwill towards military service members is being abused as advertisers and performers try to make their brands more sympathetic. These commercials are engineered to be touching and seem to be paying superficial homage to the troops, but in reality they are trying to promote beer brands and attempting

to give meaning to the singing and dancing during halftime shows. Sympathy for those who have served in the military is a commendable feeling, and it is one that benefits veterans after they come home. At its best, this goodwill leads to better job opportunities, subsidized housing and education, and general kindness towards the men and women who have served. However, the exploitation of American sympathy for the troops, as seen in commercials that feature a soldier in hopes that more people will buy a certain brand of dog food, vehicle, or beverage, is deplorable. Americans should recognize this attempt at manipulation and resent the diversion of their sympathy from the troops to Jeep or Budweiser.

Diets are not negative

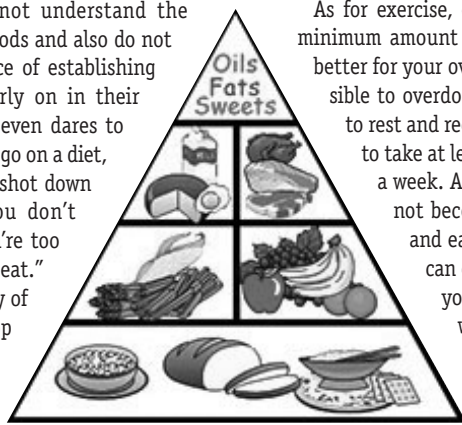
by Rheagan Rizio
Sports Editor



In today's society, diets have an extremely negative connotation. People associate diets with feelings of insecurity and an obsession with weight and appearance. This is not a good thing, because diets can be positive. Watching what you eat, as well as having proper exercise habits, are essential to a healthy lifestyle.

Obesity is a big problem in the United States. It increases your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, arthritis, and certain types of cancers. With the wide variety of unhealthy food available nowadays, obesity is a continual concern, especially childhood obesity. Many children are raised on extremely unhealthy convenience foods, such as soda, McDonalds, and pizza. One of the most dangerous ingredients in many snack foods is high fructose corn syrup, which is linked to increased risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, according to Doctor Mark Hyman's article in Huffington Post. Most children do not understand the dangers of eating these foods and also do not understand the importance of establishing healthy eating habits early on in their lives. However, if a child even dares to say that they would like to go on a diet, they are almost instantly shot down with comments like "you don't need to do that," or "you're too young to watch what you eat." While children need plenty of food to continue to develop properly, a child's desire to eat healthier should not be dismissed because it

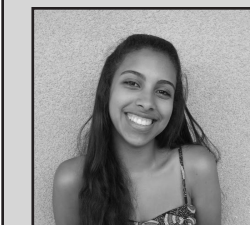
is important too. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, eating a healthy diet that comprises mainly of fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of many cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers. One of the main issues with diets is the perception of what they entail. Many assume that going on a diet means cutting out meals and not eating as much food. But this is not correct, in fact many diets suggest eating more during the day than one usually would. This is because constant snacking throughout the day will kill hunger pangs, and as long as the snacks are healthy (such as carrots and almonds) this is better for many people than eating only three meals a day and overeating because of a misconception of hunger. Obviously there are other factors that are necessary to lead a healthy life. Eating right is important, but so is exercise. It seems that in our society many people think that they only need to do one or the other to be healthy, but this is just not true. Experts recommend at least 30 minutes of physical activity a minimum of five times a week, and they recommend a balanced diet comprising of the five main food groups. This is not to say that it is not okay to indulge and eat junk food sometimes, but your main diet should not consist purely of junk food. As for exercise, exercising more than the minimum amount is obviously great and is better for your overall health, but it is possible to overdo it. Your body needs time to rest and recuperate, so it is advisable to take at least one day off of exercise a week. As long as this day off does not become a day to just pig out and eat as much as you want, it can only do positive things for yourself and for your overall well-being. (Sources: New England Journal of Medicine, Huffington Post)



courtesy wikicommons

Celebrities should act as responsible role models

by Liat Rubin
Sports Editor



Around the world and particularly in the United States, we cherish and adore a small group of people known as celebrities for their accomplishments in entertainment, sports, and other fields. We idolize this elite group of people and grant them preferential treatment based off of their fame. Being a Los Angeles native, I have constantly encountered the special treatment of celebrities. I have stared jealously at their designated VIP security lines at the airport and I have had my reserved table given away multiple times to an "A list star."

I am willing to accept these instances because although they are annoying, they are ultimately insignificant. What astounds and disgusts me, however, is how the preferential treatment of celebrities expands beyond VIP lines and reserved tables and into their treatment under the law. Celebrities are constantly being given lighter sentences than the sentences given to non-celebrities for the same crimes. This reoccurring injustice is unfair and sends a negative message to the numerous fans of these so-called idols.

Being starstruck is no excuse to let a celebrity who is in violation of the law slip by without any consequences. For example, when musician Robert Richie (also known as Kid Rock) was pulled over by Vanderbilt Police in Nashville, Tennessee, in February 2005 on suspicion of driving under the influence, the officer chose not to perform a sobriety test and instead issued a warning. He also got Kid Rock's autograph. Vanderbilt Police Captain Pat Cunningham later said "We don't have any way of knowing, had the field-sobriety test been done, how that would have come out." At the time of the traffic stop, Richie was also wanted for punching a DJ at a strip club earlier that night. The officer's treatment of Richie is absolutely despicable; in no way was it okay for the officer to neglect his duties and fail to perform a test on Richie. By letting him go and obtaining an autograph for himself, the officer put people in danger and lost the opportunity to turn Richie in for his earlier alleged assault. Had Rock been a non-celebrity and therefore a mere mortal, he would have been given a sobriety test like is common for the rest of the population. Giving celebrities lighter sentences and treating their crimes as less offensive than those of the same degree performed by non-celebrities has the negative effect of sending the wrong message to young fans. While hip hop legend Dr. Dre was part of the rap group NWA, he violently assaulted an interviewer named Dee Barnes, slamming

her face and the right side of her body repeatedly against a wall near a stairway and kicking her in the ribs. Dre later commented "People talk all this s***, but you know, somebody f*** with me, I'm gonna f*** with them. I just did it, you know. Besides, it ain't no big thing-- I just threw her through a door." Criminaldefenselawyer.com says that the typical sentence for assault is anywhere from "six months in jail and a fine up to \$1000 or a fine for up to \$2000 and probation and jail for one year," a sentencing much more extreme than Dre's. However, Dre was sentenced to 240 hours of community service, two years probation and creation of an anti-violence PSA. Dre's career barely suffered as he went on to release the monstrously successful The Chronic, which has sold 4.5 million copies to date. His actions set a very negative example for all of Dre's younger impressionable fans on the penalties and consequences for committing assault and/or battery, and the fact that they were treated so lightly under the law is even worse. Both Kid Rock and Dr. Dre prove the despicable nature of the law to give preferential treatment to celebrities. The attitude of the court and governmental systems towards the sentencing of celebrities is unfair and detrimental to the celebrities fans. Celebrities should be treated equally under the law for the overall benefit of society.