



Features: Gaming



Entertainment: Twilight



Sports: Girls' Tennis

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| Segerstrom High School |

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My Nguyen Nguyen
Staff Writer / Cartoonist

Did You Hear About *Rumors*?

On November 20 and 21, the Drama class took *Rumors* to the stage at 6:30 in the theatre. The Friday night cast featured a more experienced cast; notwithstanding, the play drew almost a full house with two-thirds of the seats filled with teachers, parents, and fellow students.

"We are proud of our actors. [The play is] expected to be absolutely astounding," commented Sandra Sanchez ('09), the cast supporter, before the show.

The play centers around a suicide cover-up and the rumors that begin to form as characters begin to act "out of character." Tim Alexander ('10), playing Ken Gorman on both nights, and Anum Ahmed ('10) and Molly Gorman ('10), playing Chris Gorman on alternate nights, performed their parts with great devotion to their characters, as did all the actors and actresses in the play.

At intermission, Mrs. Verhaegen commented on how she could see that "a lot of hard work" went into the show. She admitted to saying that the "show was hard to do" and that it was "well done." Even though Mrs. Verhaegen has seen the play over 25 times elsewhere, in comparing the high school students to adults, the Segerstrom cast had, "very good elements and comic timing."

Parent of Molly Gorman, Tom Gorman, said that "it's good and funny; [he was] very proud [of his daughter]." In response to the questionable language of the play, as a parent he replied jokingly that "at [my] home, it's perfectly proper." Mrs. Verhaegen as well did not seem to mind small triviality since the students are young adults and it is used in "modern plays, halls, TV, and nightly shows."

In the end the play received much applause. The actors were funny and the audience responded to that. *Rumors* has marked a successful beginning to the school year for both the Drama class and the VAPA department.



Clockwise from top left: David Hernandez ('10) as Lenny speaks with Xiomara Ossorio ('10) as Claire; the full cast during the bow; Luis Ceja ('09) as Ernie, Maggie Iniguez ('09) as Cookie, Lenny, and Claire conversing; Lenny after his infamous speech; and several friends talk amongst each other.



| Who is your favorite character in any work of literature? |



Tommy Souvannavong ('12)
"I like the *Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss."

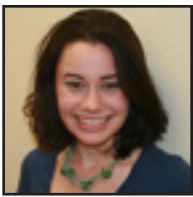


Barbara Hernandez ('09)
"Anne Frank from *The Diary of Anne Frank*."



Winslow Thai ('11)
"Kirby from *Kirby's Adventures*."

Editor's Corner



Okay, so it's Christmas time. YAY! We can all walk around and enjoy the pretty lights, drink hot chocolate, snuggle, and soon not have to worry about homework due the next day. However, many of us are not having such a happy time at this time of year. With the economy crumbling more and more each day, some of our parents have lost their jobs, or are having to work twice as many hours to keep up with things. Presents will be fewer this year, if there are any at all, and it will be harder than ever to find the happiness in this holiday season. Okay... So what? I know that sounds insensitive, and I am not trying to downplay any of your hardships, but unless you are a multi-millionaire (and if you are, we should *really* hang out some time), everyone is having a hard time right now. If all you do is focus on your own difficulties then, well, you are a very depressing person. Ask one of your friends how their family is doing, and I would bet money that they will tell you a sob story about only getting one present this year, or not being able to take the annual family vacation because of this or that reason. Again, I ask, so what? Just because money is tight right now should not prevent you from enjoying this time of year. Go into the South Coast Repertory garden area and look at the big ol' Christmas tree, smell the crisp air, tell your little brothers and sisters about Santa and his reindeer, do something, *anything* to enjoy yourself. This is one of the only times of the year (other than summer) where you do not need an excuse to be overjoyed with life. Don't miss out!

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Confessions of a Three-Time Black Friday Shopper



Jennifer Lai
Design Editor-in-Chief

Oh, Thanksgiving. There really can't be anything better than spending the entire day with your family and stuffing yourself with turkey, mashed potatoes, and of course, apple pie. After all this, you'd probably end up in a food coma and want to stay home the following day in order to recover.

But this isn't the case for some people, such as myself, who'd much rather sleep for about two hours (still in a food coma!), then wake up at three in the morning on Friday to meet with some friends in line outside of Best Buy.

Go ahead and call me insane, especially since I didn't buy anything for myself, (but I did for others) after spending about nine hours around the South Coast Plaza and Metro Pointe area that morning. There are two sacred words behind this insanity: Black Friday.

Known as one of the busiest shopping days of the year, Black Friday derived its name from the heavy traffic that occurred in Philadelphia in the 1960s on the day after Thanksgiving. According to Wikipedia, the media recently started referring to it as "the beginning of the period in which retailers go from being in the red to being in the black (i.e., turning a profit)." Similar to Black Friday is Cyber Monday, the first Monday after Thanksgiving, which is the kick-off day for online holiday shopping.

There are certainly some pros and cons to Black Friday. On the good side, it's the perfect day to receive the best deals on products and merchandise. It's certainly a good idea to go shopping for presents as well; no one wants to wait until a few days before Christmas. Even a procrastinator like myself (only sometimes, of course) wouldn't dare go last-minute shopping.

On the other hand, Black Friday has its drawbacks. Aside from the outrageously long lines, some people can be rude and impatient while shopping. Pushing,

shoving, glaring, rolling eyes – it can get pretty intolerable at times. And if someone decides to sleep in and shop later in the day, well, all the "doorbuster" items and awesome deals will be gone, and everything will be in disarray. In short, Black Friday can probably be anyone's worst nightmare.

But what strikes me as both astounding and disheartening is how this day could get completely out of hand and beyond chaotic. Three deaths occurred on this year's Black Friday: a Wal-Mart employee who was trampled to death upon opening the store doors, and two men who shot and killed each other, possibly after an argument over merchandise. I find it almost fascinating, really,

how people can behave like animals on the first day of the ever-so-blissful holiday season. My question is, what causes them to act this way? What is their *real* motivation for taking part in Black Friday?

"It's unfortunate that people are so hyped up in the sales and discounts of material items that they forget to think about others, which is what the holiday season is all about," said Janet Siu ('09) in response to the three deaths.

Quite frankly, I couldn't have said it better myself.

2008 is the third straight year I participated in the Black Friday frenzy. It's personally one

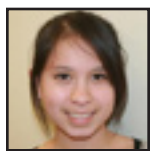
of my favorite days during the holiday season because I find it enjoyable to be surrounded by people with goals similar to mine (as strange as that sounds). Black Friday isn't all about getting all the great deals for oneself; such a materialistic goal could definitely lead to an obsession, which could result in chaos and mayhem. It really comes down to thinking about the people one cares about and scurrying around to find that perfect present. The best part is imagining the look on their face when they open it; that always makes me smile.

Yes, I'm sure that could possibly lead to the chaos I previously mentioned, but just as long as it doesn't get to one's head, everything should be fine. Black Friday doesn't have to be just another dreaded day in the year; it can definitely be a rewarding experience if people can approach it with an open mind and heart that are well-suited for the wonderful holiday season.



4:00 AM and the line is *that* long?! Black Friday morning in the Metro Pointe parking area right outside of Best Buy.

The Media Influences Everyone



Karen Alvarez
Staff Writer

Media includes: television, radio, personal web pages, blogs – the list is seemingly endless. The influence that media has on teenagers is undeniable, yet sometimes stubborn teen attempt to assert their "independent" thinking.

For some students, the media has completely molded the person they presently are. Chris Franco ('09) has a very different style that most students. He stands out because of his classic outfits and big hair.

"Music has been my primary influence: mainly rockabilly and psychobilly. They have influenced the way that I dress which is mostly focused on the 50's rockabilly style. The media has also influenced me to start playing the guitar," said Franco.

Other students like Desiree Velasquez ('12) have been influenced to consider certain career paths as result of the media.

"My favorite show is CSI and I do think that it has a significant influence on me. The show is captivating and the investigations are interesting. I am considering Crime Scene Investigating as a potential career option," said Velasquez.

The media does not always have a defining influence on students, but it usually impacts the products they purchase. Ricardo Quintanilla ('09) observed a trend in the commercials that he watches.

"If commercials show good taste or humor, I respect that company or organization. Therefore I am more prone to purchase what they are selling," said Quintanilla.

Jose Aranda ('11), who, like other students, does not feel that the media influences his life in any way.

"I watch a lot of television but it is for pure entertainment. I do not think that any forms of media impact my style at all," said Aranda.

Some students do not acknowledge that their choices of style and even careers are impacted in some way by the media. There is the possibility that they are not aware of it. For instance, Selene Aceves ('10) thinks that it unconsciously does influence her although she might not acknowledge it consciously.

"According to Einstein's Law of Relativity everything is relative so if someone is not influenced by advertisements directly, their surroundings influence him and they are influenced by advertisements," said Quintanilla.

Seminar Face-Offs: Get Your Game Face On!



Battles of Epic Proportions (clockwise from top right) Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Hargrave’s seminar classes battle it out with human pyramids; Mr. Quinanola’s class looks ready for any challenge with their “Q” shirts; students from Mrs. Dobbs’s class giving their all in a game of Tug O’ War.



Austin Nguy
Staff Writer

Throughout the school, rivalry has often been seen between seminar classes. Door decorating contests, sports competitions, and seminar T-shirts all spark friendly competition between the classes. Ever since the first door decorating contest was set forth this year, a new beginning for rival groups was set. Upper class rivalries were renewed, while freshmen and sophomore rivalries have been triggered.

One of the most recent events featured dodgeball competitions between seminar classes. “We can beat anyone in dodge ball,” commented Mrs. Dugan.

Deemed as one of the most competitive and spirited classes, Mrs. Dugan’s seminar T-shirts with new designs were created every year since freshmen year. This year’s outfit includes a black shirt projecting “Team Dugan” followed by a yellow headband.

This year’s major rivalry seems to fall between Mrs. Dugan and Mr. Castanha. “Bring it on, Castanha,” said Mrs. Dugan, bearing much conviction.

Though despite their opposition, Ms. Dugan is thought of as a rival by Mr Quinanola as well. “She bribed the judges with brownies, although I *know* that our door was superior to hers,” said Mr. Quinanola.



Mr. Quinanola claims that his rival is Ms. Nguyen, but apparently for her, it’s completely the opposite. “Q... what competition?” said Ms. Nguyen, without a moment’s hesitation. Mr. Quinanola’s had defeated Ms. Nguyen in Tug o’ war in the past, but has lost to Ms. Nguyen in the Gotham City Door Decorating Contest. Still, Mr. Quinanola takes pride in his seminar class, “Team Q is the greatest seminar ever.”

The biggest upcoming seminar event seems to be the first School-wide Seminar Showdown Competition. Organized by the Seminar Committee the School-wide Seminar Showdown Competition is comprised of 50 activities seminar teachers can choose from, and each class goes against their assigned opponents. Such games range from common games

like Tug o’ war, limbo, charades, and the card game of Speed to the more unique, such as the Mummy Wrap Contest, Toilet Paper Roll Race, Fish in the Face Competition, and many more fun activities.

Students as well as teachers are very enthusiastic about the seminar rivalry. “Anytime, anywhere, nobody can touch us,” said Jacob Sanders (‘10) a member of Ms. Nguyen’s seminar class.

Along with enthusiasm, enjoyment and having fun is also a major part of it. “It’s really cool, and we all get pumped up to beat everyone, especially Ms. Nguyen. It’s going down,” said Ariel Williams (‘10).

Mere rivalry is not enough to describe this display of wins or losses – it’s a fight for each class to the end. And because of it, the school is brought together as a whole.

What in the World is WASC?



My Nguyen Nguyen
Staff Writer / Cartoonist

From March 29 to April 1, our school will be evaluated by a team of educators known as WASC.

Staff, parents, and students have all been involved in the self-study process of Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The self-study document will be presented by the school as guidelines for the evaluators.

“I’m very proud of this school. We have excellent students and staff. [I am] excited for the team to come ... If they see what we do every day, we will be a shining star,” said Ms. Dugan when asked to comment about the WASC team.

When they arrive, they will meet with parents, staff, and students for interviews. The team will visit classrooms and see how the school operates as a whole.

“I think that the school will be really ready. Our goal is to get a six-year accreditation, with out any



mid-term visitations. We would be the first high school in Santa Ana to get one,” stated Mr. Mocnik, the new assistant principal.

Brian Espinoza (‘10) commented on how “we haven’t had any problems so far, so if we do what we keep doing, we’ll be okay.”

Hopefully, if what Espinoza said is true, our school will live up to its expected potential and have a good first impression.

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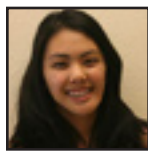
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Teenagers and Video Games Go Together Like Cake and Frosting



Kristen Minami
Staff Writer

Teenagers and video games go hand in hand, it seems. From the infamous *Pong*, all the way up to *Call of Duty*, teenagers are often catered to with regards to games. According to the Christian Science Monitor, 97% of teenagers play video games. However, there is a slight gender divide of 99% of boys playing compared to 94% of girls playing. This is a huge difference even from just five years ago.

Experts suspect that the heavier emphasis on academic success and the pressure teenagers face contribute to their playing video games as a form of escape and detraction. "Playing video games gets my mind off stressful stuff and it's a great way to bond with friends," said Christian Perez (12).

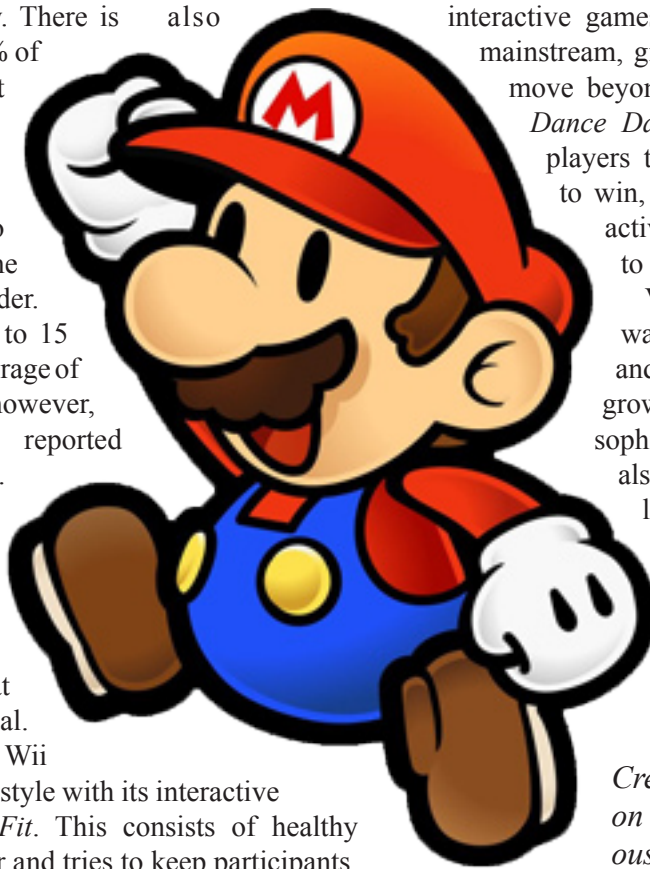
Exposure to video games has now significantly increased. As younger children, we remember the games of *Pokemon* or *Mario* that would often take up many hours of our free time. Now, as teenagers, our video games consist of *Halo 3*, *Call of Duty*, or *Guitar Hero*, which is the most popular game in the nation. Furthermore, games have recently gotten more violent. One out of three teenagers surveyed reported that at

least one of their three favorite games is rated Mature or Adult Only. There is also a gender gap, with 79% of boys favoring violent game, compared to 21% of girls. However, the amount of time spent on video games seems to decline as the teenager gets older. Respondents aged 13 to 15 reported playing an average of 6.7 hours per week; however, 16 to 17-year-olds reported playing only 4.4 hours.

However, in addition to increased violence, video games have also grown to promote social behavior that benefits the individual. For instance, the *Wii* promotes an active lifestyle with its interactive games, like the *Wii Fit*. This consists of healthy activities for the player and tries to keep participants, especially teenagers, from just sitting down and

mindlessly playing another video game. Other interactive games have surfaced and become mainstream, giving teens the opportunity to move beyond the couch-potato life. The *Dance Dance Revolution* game forces players to get up and dance in order to win, and *Guitar Hero* has players actively playing a guitar in order to move to the next level.

Video games have come a long way since the days of *Pokemon* and *Super Mario*. They have grown both in violence, as well as sophistication. Interactive games also ironically promote healthier lifestyles. Video game's impact on our lifestyle has grown so much that it has become an almost necessary part of our modern culture.



Credits of all gaming images on these two pages go to various internet sites.

Video Games of Our Generation



My Nguyen Nguyen
Staff Writer / Cartoonist

Growing up as a child, we did not have such advances as the *Wii*, the *DS*, or the *PSP*. We did not have small *iPods*, the *iPod touch*, or *iPhone*. The consoles of our generation were *Gameboys* or at most, the *Gameboy Advance*, and maybe a *Neopet*. Through these *Gameboys* or *Neopets*, we had some of the most memorable games and times ever.

An average student going back in time to their elementary school years should remember

the catch from a *Pokemon* game, the adventures

from a *Super Mario* travel,

or the fights from a *Power*

Rangers game against the forces of evil.

Even today, however outdated these games may be, they will never

cease to bring a challenge to new or old comers. "They were the most difficult games ever; no one ever saw the ending," said Ricardo Quintanilla ('09).

Recently actually, a form of *Neopets* have started to come back. Student Andrew Do ('10) has been trying to bring *tamagotchi* back into style, and fellow Brian Espinoza ('10) can be seen sporting one. A *tamagotchi* is a virtual pet that you take care of, kind of like a *Neopet*.

"I think it's really cool because it's like a real pet but even if it dies, you can start over. It's easier to take care of [and] you can pause it if you don't have the time," stated Do.

Even though these games may seem like a thing of the past, they are still seen in today's gaming culture. The Nintendo *Wii* has come up with *Mario Kart*; the different portable game consoles still carry now modernized *Diamond and Pearl* versions of *Pokemon*; and the *Power Rangers* are still coming out with new series and more toys.

Now, today, the gaming experience is obviously more engaging. The *Wii* actually allows for a work out. From our times however, the most physical exercise we would

probably get out of a game is attempting to shoot the ducks on the classic *Duck Hunt* on the Nintendo or jumping up and down in glee when we beat a particularly difficult level. This does not mean that we were that deprived. *Dance Dance Revolution* is considered a part of our generation.

"It's a form of exercise and entertainments with all of the songs that make you want to dance. It's awesome; I played it all summer one year. The original *DDR* from Japan is better than the ones from the US through because they are better to dance to," said Tiffany Pham ('09).

Overall, just because now there are new advances in technology which may offer a "better" gaming experience, the actual games themselves have a hard time living up to the games of the past.



Gaming: Hobby or Obsession?



Sana Ahmed
Staff Writer

Teenagers across the nation have fallen victim to the dangerous epidemic of video game obsession. On average, they play video games two hours a day and 64 percent of all American children play at least one hour a day. About 10 years ago, teens played half as much as they do today. Teen consumers have made up nearly 55% of video game sales and this is expected to rise with the upcoming holidays.

Most teens play video games for entertainment, but others play because they see winning a game as an accomplishment. Video game obsession can cause teens to spend less time on completing homework and hours on gaming. Several who play constantly often have games in their rooms and stay up late playing and they also have a tendency to eat unhealthily. They can easily lose focus and become extremely impatient. Many teens who show signs of obsession with gaming deny that they have a problem at all.

When asked if he was obsessed with video games, Jorge Avalos ('11) answered, "Well, I play 2 or 3 hours a day before I do my homework and I play all weekend, so I guess I'm obsessed."

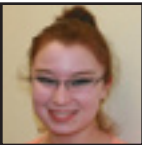
While playing games occasionally is not something to worry about, teens might want to re-examine their habits if they find themselves spending hours playing and find their grades slipping.

You Know Video Games
Are Taking Over Your Life When...

- You fall asleep mid-game
- You start surveying streets as though they're levels from a game
- The prospect of a new console gives you chronic insomnia
- You are old enough to go and find yourself a girl-friend or boyfriend, but the only people that ever come to your house are your fellow gamers
- You live in a house made of games
- You are watching real-life sports on TV and shouting button commands at the players
- They make you angry to the point where you really need the anger management

Credits to GamesRadar.com

Negative Effects of Various Video Games May Influence Gamers



Laura Stueland
Staff Writer

As video games have become increasingly violent their content has become a promoter of hostility rather than a pleasant pastime.

Researchers at the Indiana School of Medicine say that brain scans of individuals who played a violent video game showed an increase in emotional arousal, and a corresponding decrease of activity in brain areas involved in self control, inhibition, and attention. Though many are unaware of the extent of danger video games may cause, the risks for increasing aggressive behavior is real. Violent video games have been shown to activate the anger center of the teenage brain while dampening the brain's conscience.

From a more comprehensive point of view, after repeated viewings of violent images, individuals can easily be accustomed to such horrors, and these images make less and less of an impact over time. Instead of being found shocking and disturbing, realistic scenes of blood and body parts splayed on a sidewalk become amusing and entertaining to the player that caused them.

"I have no response to the violence; I'm used to it. I just continue on with my quest," said Yareli Alcantar ('11).

Constant exposure to these types of images can also cause viewers to perceive the world as more violent and hostile than it is, and also

normalizes using violence as the best way to solve conflicts. As a result, their responses to a perceived threat may be more likely to quickly escalate to violence.

Even video games that are scarce of violence come with their own adverse effects, like obesity and the well-known couch potato syndrome. Last January a report by the Centers for Disease Control and prevention (CDC), Dr. William Dietz, Director of the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity concluded that of all the ways to reduce weight gain, TV and videogame reduction appears to be the most effective.

In response to these facts, Haide Hernandez ('12) said, "I play Pacman, Mario, Trash, and Spongebob, which are addicting and lead me to sitting around all day and never going outside."

It is no surprise that a gamer will forget the real world as he/she becomes more and more deeply submersed in another realm, however, it is a healthier to put down the control and do something else.

"I'd rather be social and be with my friends. Video games just take time away from me," said Rocio Hernandez ('11).

Not everyone believes in the negative effects of video games. Some believe that not all video games are totally useless and a waste of time, and that some actually have a positive effect on the brain.

good. People make a big deal out of them, especially Grand Theft Auto, but it informs you. If people are dumb enough to go along with it (what happens on video games) that's their problem."

Others believe that certain video games can have positive effects, but others may have very negative effects.

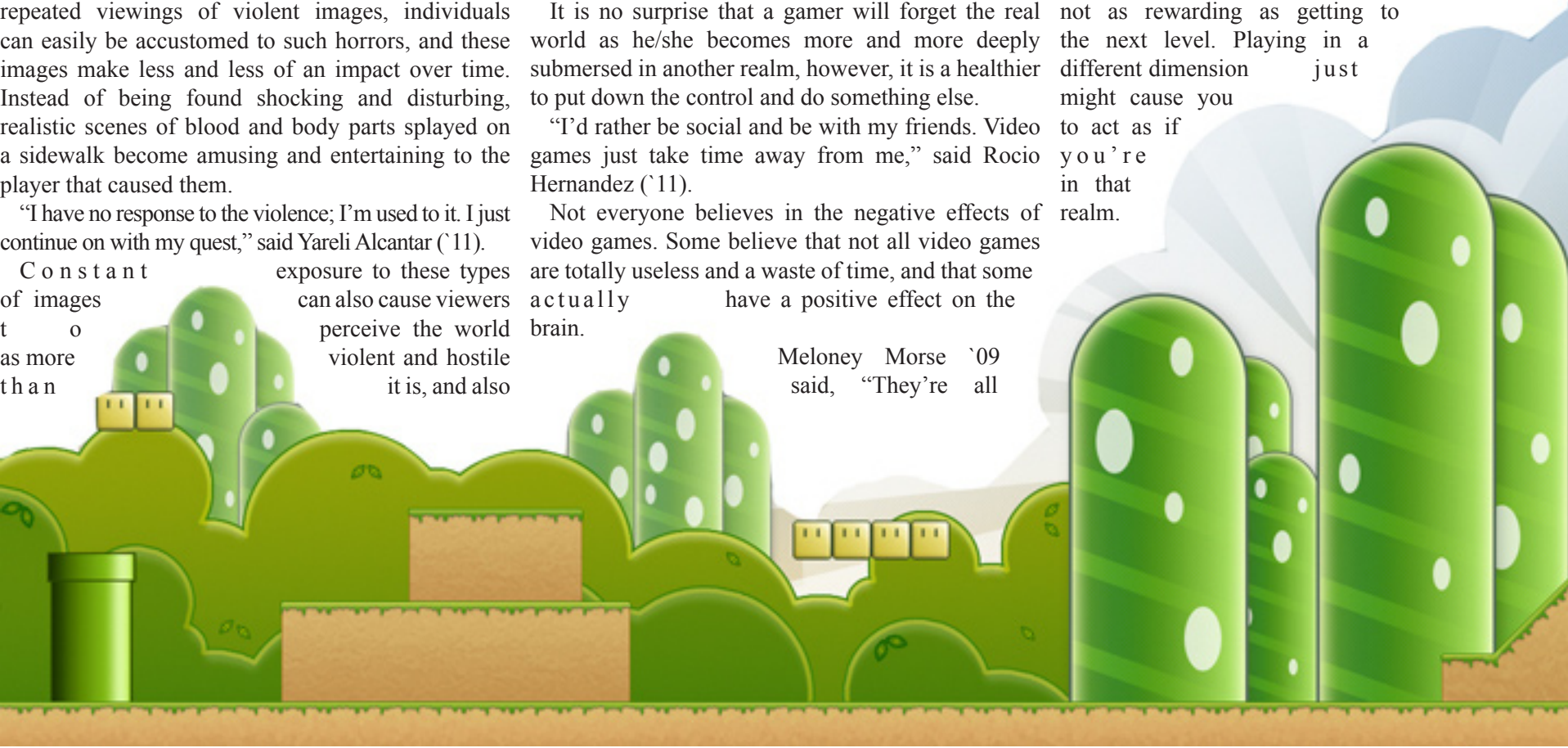
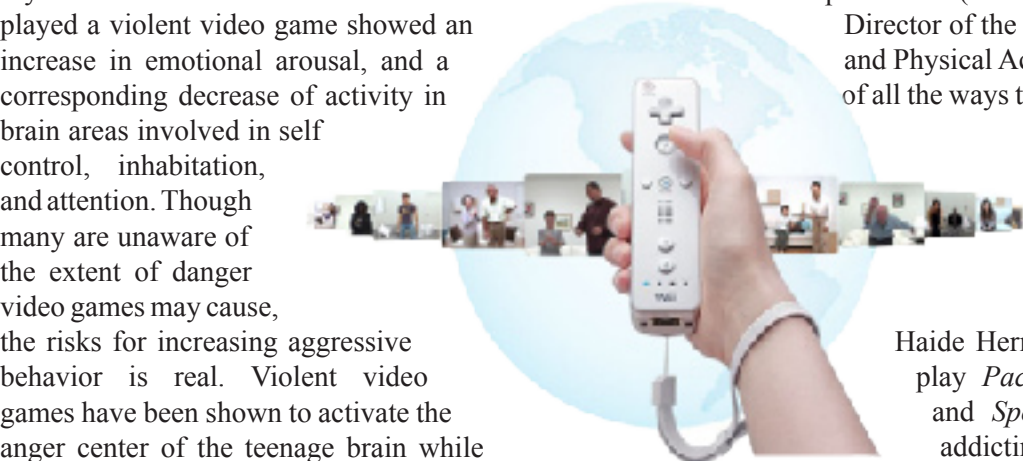
"It really depends on the type of game you play because some have a scholarly influence and some are addictive and keep you away from the outside world," commented Sal Gutierrez ('11).

The most widely known positive impact video games are said to maybe have is an improvement of a player's manual dexterity and computer literacy.

Alejandra Martinez ('11), an expert at Guitar Hero and player of various games, said, "They entertain you, but I get too focused on them, causing me to slack off and are a major distraction. I'll tell myself 'once I pass this level then I'll do my homework' and my vision starts blurring. You can get led into a life that won't lead you any further."

Being constantly engaged in a videogame is no doubt entertaining, whatever style you're into, but the negative effects they create are not as rewarding as getting to the next level. Playing in a different dimension just might cause you to act as if you're in that realm.

Meloney Morse '09 said, "They're all



The End of Reading Counts (But Not Word Counts!)



Kristen Minami
Staff Writer

Every student in the school has to do Reading Counts for a grade in their English class. But this year, Reading Counts has been eliminated. Instead of reading a book and then taking a ten-question quiz on it, students now have to do a book report. There are some pros and cons to the new Reading Accountability Program.

The original Reading Counts was rather simple. It was a ten-question multiple choice quiz that was about the selected book, and all students had to do was choose the correct answer. All that was needed to pass was a score of seven or higher. If the quiz is passed, then the words for the book are accumulated. The students' goal is to read at least the required minimum for their grade level, if not more. The pros to the quiz style were that it was short and simple. The major con to the quiz was that if you failed the quiz, the words for the book would not be obtained.

"Less students will do it, because it's more work," said Jessica Gutierrez ('11).



The new Reading Accountability Program is basically a book report. The book report content will vary depending on the English teacher. Some teachers will have a format available for students to download online, Cornell Notes, or some other form. But, all the reports will contain the same general information. Character details, plot generalization and theme are major points focused on. The upside to the book reports is that there would be no more quiz taking and possible failing. The downside is that a report will have to be written, which is more work.

"The teachers expect too much out of us," said Nancy Guillen ('11).

Why the sudden change? Well, it costs about \$7 per student to have a Reading Counts quiz account. To add to the pricey fee for an account, the school's selection of available quizzes for students is not very big. So, the change to book reports actually benefits both the students and the school. The school saves money by not having to pay for Reading Counts quizzes anymore and the students have a wider variety of books to choose from.

The only remaining question is- Will the new style of word count be better? The quiz style of Reading Counts was doing okay and the book reports will be different. Only time will tell if the difference is truly a benefit or loss in the long run.

Coats, Boots, Scarves - It's That Time of Year Again!



My Nguyen
Staff Writer / Cartoonist

With a new season coming, there are new fashions to look out for and new trends to follow. Some of the worst and best winter fashions can help one get ready for a cold winter while staying in a stylish season.

"Many girls are wearing boots, wedges, scarves and peacoats. As with any fall, rich colors are coming back into play as summer floral dresses are being shoved into backs of closets. Another popular accessory for girls is printed tights," said Kimberly Thoumaked ('09).

According to shopping.aol.com, what Thoumaked stated was not far from the truth. According to them, short coats, high waists, dramatic makeup, booties, plaids, menswear inspired items, cardigans, patent

leather accessories, wide legged jeans, tights and leggings, and beanies are what is best for the fall fashions.

What the website considered the worst for the season however, are overwhelming amounts of brown, crazy prints and leggings, chokingly high necklines, sequins, and bell sleeves.

All of this, of course, has mostly to do with women. For men, their style stays almost as it has been, except for simply layering up for the season.

Mensfashion.about.com stated in their "Men's Fall/ Winter Wardrobe Must Haves" that the styles for the fall season for men are to wear cardigans, pinstriped pants, striped shirts, blazer or sports jackets, flat-front trill pants, and of course, the all-crucial jeans.

Basically, the fashions are as it has been in the past years, with only subtle differences as tastes begin to change. So get ready to bundle up!

"L33tsp34k": Netspeak Gone Wrong?



Google + l33tsp34k = What?

Google, with its tendencies to change their logos from time to time, at one point worked with l33t as well. (right) Upon looking up "Google l33t," the very first link is the h4x0r Google page. (bottom) This was the original Google l33t design.



Joseph Anderson
Staff Writer

Gamers have developed their own culture complete with a social hierarchy, customs, and a language, dubbed *L33tspeak* (pronounced elite speak or just leetspeak). This is a language unique to each game, complete with verb tenses and nouns. Here is a quick rundown to help figure out what *XxNoobXDestroyerxX21* said in WoW last night.

Skipping the obvious (n00bs), a common aspect of *l33tspeak* is replacing letters with numbers. Other pieces include over exclamation, which emphasizes the player's degree of happiness. Sometimes the exclamation is replaced by a "one" either deliberately or by accident and has been sarcastically enhanced to (OMG!!!!1one!!) or even (OMG!!one11six!!).

Gamers have a tendency of "verbing" nouns in by turning a verb into a noun. For example, Austin Rocks is weaker than *Austin roxxorx!* "X" is a common replacement for the "ck" sound but the meaning remains the same as in *haxors*. Leaving letters out is also very common; for instance, "owned" can be

changed to "own'd" or even "pwn'd."

Although *l33tspeak* was developed by season players as a secret language, it can be seen by some as "n00bish." In some games it is commonly used by spammers to give the appearance that they know what they're talking about. To avoid spammers gamers can type *phr33 5t0ph pl0x!* or *free stuff please*.

Other common misspellings and phrases include *Warez* or free pirated software. Teh is a typo of "the" and will sometimes be shown as T3h, joo replaces you quite frequently and MOAR will take the place of more. *Mekeke* is the Korean version of *hahaha*, in English, *jajaja*, in Spanish, or *fufufu* in Japanese.

Recently though, there has been a backlash against *l33tspeak* as it is commonly seen as "noobish" or immature. Diana Tran ('09) recalled the recent downfall of the language. "At first I thought it was cool, speaking in a secret coded language, but now that secret's out and people abused it and killed it," she said.

These are some of the basic variations of the gamer language, but it is impossible to tell which games exactly use which pieces. The only way to learn the gamer language is to get out and play, so go and pwn a n00b with a crazy no scope headshot.

Caught in the *Twilight* Frenzy



Cartoon by My Nguyen Nguyen



Jennifer Lai
Design Editor-in-Chief

Vampires, fangirls, and a movie. What does this make you think of? Nothing other than the *Twilight* saga, of course. It has become a tremendous overnight success and phenomenon for young adult readers and beyond. Stephanie Meyer, the author of the 4-book series, claims she had no idea her vampire series would build such a fanbase in such a short period of time.

Told through the perspective of the protagonist herself, *Twilight* follows a young girl named Isabella “Bella” Swan, who moves from Arizona to Washington and falls in love with the godlike vampire Edward

“So where does this leave *Midnight Sun*? My first feeling was that there was no way to continue. Writing isn’t like math; two plus two always equals four no matter what your mood is like. With writing, the way you feel changes everything. . . . In any case, I feel too sad about what has happened to continue working on *Midnight Sun*, and so it is on hold indefinitely.”

- Stephanie Meyer’s Official Website (08/28/08)
In response to illegal release of *Midnight Sun*

Cullen. As the two build on their unorthodox romance, trouble quickly arises and threatens their relationship. *Twilight* is followed by *New Moon*, *Eclipse*, and *Breaking Dawn*.

“*Twilight* was a good book until every girl on campus had it on the edge of her desk,” said Helen Ton (‘10), when asked about the *Twilight* frenzy on campus. “But there’s something oddly addicting about it that has engulfed the whole teen girl population.”

Fans of the *Twilight* saga went to midnight release parties for the final novel of the series on the night before August 2. According to Hachette Book Group USA, the book broke records, selling 1.3 million copies in the first 24 hours alone. Prior to *Breaking Dawn*, the first three titles together sold 8.5 million copies in the U.S.

Shortly after the release of *Breaking Dawn*, an incomplete transcript of Meyer’s next book *Midnight Sun*, the story seen through Edward Cullen’s eyes, was leaked onto the internet without her permission. Meyer later released a statement on her official website about the leak, stating that it was a “very upsetting experience.” She hopes that her fans will take from this a “better understanding of copyright and the importance of artistic control.” And because

of what happened, Meyer has decided that *Midnight Sun* is on hold indefinitely.

On November 21, *Twilight* hit movie theaters across the nation and grossed at \$35.7 million on opening day. Directed by Catherine Hardwicke, *Twilight* stars Kristen Stewart as Bella Swan and Robert Pattinson as Edward Cullen. The release of the movie forced the delay of the sixth *Harry Potter* movie, which is to be released in the summer of 2009.

“I think it would have been better received if it hadn’t have gotten so much hype,” said Alicia Rausch (‘09), who saw the movie on opening weekend. “People’s expectations were too high, and it affected how the movie was received. Most people I talked to were really

excited to go see it, and then came back to school that next week talking about how it wasn’t good. But I also know people who liked it. I guess it really just depends on the mindset you went into the movie with.”

Both the movie and book series satisfied many fans across the globe. Since the release of *Twilight*, the fanbase has been growing exponentially, with fansites, merchandise, and of course, the recruitment of more fans through interest and intrigue. Though the fanbase is primarily made of teenage girls, as Ton said, young men have worked up the courage to see what the craze is all about as well.

“I did read *Twilight*, but just the first book,” said Josaphat Valdivia (‘09). “I can’t sympathize with the girls who say that Edward is, like, the most beautiful male on the planet because one, he’s not real and two, I’m a guy. Describing him over and over as “perfect” really doesn’t give me a good description of how he really looks. It’s a good story as far as stories go, but it’s just really vague. It’s weird; how can the scent of his breath be intoxicating? He’s a vampire! Does it smell like blood?”

Until the next step for the *Twilight* phenomenon, fans will just have to keep sinking their imaginary fangs into what they have now.

Top Ten Hot Topics of 2008

1. 2008 Presidential Election

– History enters an entirely new stage as Senator Barack Obama is elected as the first African American President of the United States.

2. Economic Downturn

– The National Bureau of Economic Research announced on December 1 that the United States entered a recession since December 2007.

3. Olympic Games in Beijing

– From the opening and closing ceremonies to Michael Phelps and Usain Bolt, the Games captured many unforgettable moments.

4. *The Dark Knight*

– As the basis of our Homecoming theme, *The Dark Knight* entrained audiences everywhere even prior to the movie’s release.

5. Revolutionary Phone Releases

– With the iPhone 3G, T-Mobile G1, and BlackBerry Storm/Bolt, there looks to be no end to this heightening technology.

6. Celebrity Deaths

– Heath Ledger and Bernie Mac passed away this year one due to a drug overdose and the other a heart attack, respectively. They will live on in the hearts of many.

7. Britney’s Comeback & Coldplay

– It was a rough year for Spears, but she is steadily making her comeback on the music charts, while Coldplay has been thriving.

8. Earthquake in China

– Over 10,000 lives were lost in this 7.9-magnitude quake from the Sichuan Province that destroyed many buildings and homes.

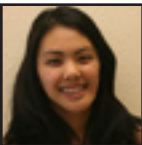
9. Mumbai Hostage Crisis

– Lasting for several days, the Mumbai terror attack took dozens of lives as gunfire from the attackers shook the city and its tourists.

10. Bill Gates Steps Down

– On June 28, Bill Gates stepped down from Microsoft to focus on the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He appointed Steve Ballmer to take his position.

Girls' Tennis: More Than Just an Accomplished Team



Kristen Minami
Staff Writer

This varsity and JV girls' tennis teams finished a strong season. The varsity team ended with a league record of 7-3, and they tied for second with Westminster High School in the Golden West League. Ultimately, they ranked third in league, which qualified them for CIF. After winning their preliminary match, they continued to win their games into the quarter finals, where they unfortunately lost to Buckley High School. Because this is the first time the girls' tennis team has qualified for CIF and progressed as far as they did, many are delighted at what they have achieved this year.

Since last year, the team has grown and improved their playing skills in order to win more games this season. According to Coach Koeler, they made great improvements in qualifying for CIF and in working together and putting forth the effort to keeping things fun.

"I think our biggest accomplishment this season was that we learned how important it is to improve as a person, played with good sportsmanship, and to help each other improve work together as a successful tennis team," said Coach Koeler.

According to Koeler, the team has a very good chance next year at winning the league championship and moving on to win more games at CIF. Most of tennis team agreed that working hard and keeping their focus throughout the season will help them achieve this goal. They also still hope to have a banner up in the gymnasium commending their accomplishments during the season.

According to the athletes, overall this year's season was very successful. "This year's girls' tennis season went very well. Everyone put up a strong fight and gave 110% of their effort. We all had our ups and down, but together as a team we kept each others' head up. I'm really glad to be part of this year's varsity tennis team because I've never seen a team have so much fun and love towards one another," said Vivian Ma ('10).



Girls Just Wanna Have Fun
(top) After a match with Orange High School, entire varsity tennis team takes time to take a group picture before leaving;
(left) At season's end, an unofficial photoshoot took place on the courts -- Smiles for all!

Boys and Girls Basketball Dribbling the Season Away



Joseph Anderson
Staff Writer

After school the gym was filled with the sound of basketballs bouncing against the linoleum wooden floor;. Yells of "pass the ball!" and "C'mon" echoed through the gym as the players prepared for the slew of tournaments awaiting them.

Recently, the varsity team participated in the Cypress Tournament, placing in the top 8 while Huntington Beach took first place. Coach Gomez said, "It was a good test to see where we're at. We could have won more games, and it shows that we need more time to prepare for the Beckman tournament on the 16th."

Along with the Beckman Tournament, the varsity team will participate in the Saddleback tournament, the Martin Luther King Jr. Invitational, and the league tournament beginning in January.

On the other hand, J.V. returned from a recent tournament in which they placed second; they are



Sana Ahmed
Staff Writer

The girl's basketball season has started and all players are aiming for success.

This season, our team has set many goals to do better than last year. Team members are seeking improvements in areas such as defense and cooperation, and are hoping to become First League

now preparing for their league tournament. Coach Altamirano said, "I'm extremely proud of the guys. We have done really well and hope to do even better for the next tournament." Irvine took first in the tournament.

"We're doing well," said varsity player Nicholas Powell ('09). "But we can do better and we're looking up for the next game."

Both teams are looking forward to improving themselves for their league tournaments in January.

Champions, according to Coach Watts and a few players. Each day, they stay an extended 30 minutes after school to run through various types of drills such as 3-minute weave, defense, dribbling, and shooting drills.

When asked how the teams is shaping up so far, Coach Watts said that our players are much more experienced, but humorously added that they were "not as tall" as the Ocean View girls.

Last year, the Segerstrom girl's basketball team did very well. The Varsity and JV teams placed second, and the freshman team became co-champs. This year, they hope to do better and become the CIF champions.

Coach Watts said, "We have great kids, who work very, very hard and hopefully we'll have a lot of success."

Several players are confident that they will play well this year.

Elysse Scott ('12) said, "Yeah, I think the Frosh-Soph team will do well this season. We'll win."

My's Top Three

Pick-Up Lines of the Month

Shouldn't you be sitting on top of the tree, Angel?

Can I take a picture of you? 'Cause I want Santa to know exactly what I want for Christmas.

I like milk and cookies, but I'd rather have you.

Upcoming Events

Dec 22-Jan 9: Winter Break

Jan 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Jan 20-23: Spirit Week

Jan 21: Delayed Start

Jan 23: "Winter in Times Square" @ Amada Center from 7PM - 11PM

Jan 28-30: Finals / Modified Days

Jan 30: End of Fall Semester

In The Next Issue...

Top 10 Things to Look Forward to in '09

Obama's Inauguration

Finals Week

New Technology

More People Applying to College

Winter Sports Update

Homework Over Vacation Breaks

Club Spotlight: Key Club