

Why we need the No Cussing Club

By Nathaniel Lash
Senior Staff Writer

The No Cussing Club has come under fire for its promotion of clean language. Its position in opposition to vulgarity is also in opposition with the First Amendment, say promoters of free speech. But what they are failing to realize is how important the No Cussing Club's existence is to the continued existence of the First Amendment.

It makes sense that people would perceive a clash of interests between the No Cussing Club and advocates of unlimited offensive speech. And yet, these are both groups that embody the ideals of the First Amendment. Dialogue—unrestricted and not regulated by the government—that is what the First Amendment was meant to protect. The people, then, are free to alter their behavior as they see fit; the No Cussing Club, through clean and wholesome speech, and the opposition by saying whatever they feel expresses themselves best.

One should take particular note of the wording of the First Amend-

ment: "Congress shall make no law..." This was eventually incorporated against the states (which includes public schools), so that no governing body may make laws about what people can and cannot say. Recent actions by the NCC demonstrate that they intend the government to become increasingly involved in what we can and cannot say. The pressure on politicians to pass

using such offensive phrases such as "gypsy" in their free time reflected the club's hope for positions of power to encourage "civil speech".

The No Cussing Club should therefore return to how it originally was: An organization for members to join to demonstrate their interest in cleaner language, and thereby encourage others to do the same. In that manner, it would exist as local chapters spreading the message of not using profanity, and when disagreements emerge, they can be discussed and debated, so that the people can make up their minds for themselves, free to come to a different conclusions from their neighbors, or their state senators. But for the NCC to take up the mantle of legislation and government involvement in regulating this speech is wholly in opposition to the letter of the First Amendment.

However, it must be realized that when one refuses others the chance to voice their opinions without fear of repression, they are, too, opposing the spirit of the First Amendment just as much.



Sam Shin

a "Cuss Free Week" in California, or the demand that Biden apologize for his f-bomb regarding the healthcare bill are just two examples of the NCC expecting elected officers to lead the charge against profanity. And although the NCC was not implicated in the statement, the recent memo to SPHS students urging them to refrain from

A generation of addicts

By Luka Douridas
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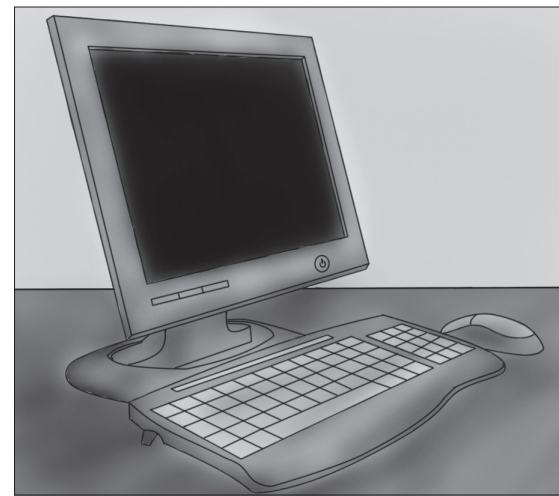
The Internet. Cyberspace. The interwebs. Whatever you call it, there's no doubt that it has drastically changed the way we live. Could you imagine the world without it? Many of us can not. Today, nearly everything involves using the Internet in some way: friends use it to connect and communicate, businesses use it to send and transfer information, and kids and adults alike rely on it as their primary source of research. Although you might think that having such a quick and convenient method of communication is bringing us together, it may be doing the exact opposite: pulling us apart.

Most of us use the Internet every day. But there is a small population that relies on the Internet so much that it has become unhealthy: according to one expert, as much as five to ten percent of Internet users suffer from Web dependency, or IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder). Reportedly, in China, it is even worse, as much as fifteen percent of all adolescents in the country suffer from this disorder, while in Hong Kong, it is estimated to be as high as forty.

The reader might think to himself that he could not possibly use the Internet enough to be considered an addict. But in having IAD, it does not matter exactly how much you use the Internet; rather, it only matters how dependent you are. Most teenagers would admit to relying on the Internet for way too many things: as a replacement for real relationships, a distraction from reality, or a quick treatment for boredom.

It may sound funny, but IAD is a serious problem. It can't be classified as a true, physical addiction, but that doesn't make it inconsequential. Millions of teenagers across the globe are locking themselves away in their rooms, each of them with their own virtual world at their fingertips. The earth shakers of the future are growing up submerged in a false reality. What will happen over the next few decades, when the Internet generation reaches adulthood? We might not know how to truly live in the real world, which would undoubtedly cause many problems.

Of course, this doesn't apply to everyone. As said before, only a small percentage suffers from IAD. Just think twice about exactly how much you use the Internet, and for whatever reasons you use it.



Sam Shin

Has demand for civility gone too far?

By Jim Wood
Staff Writer

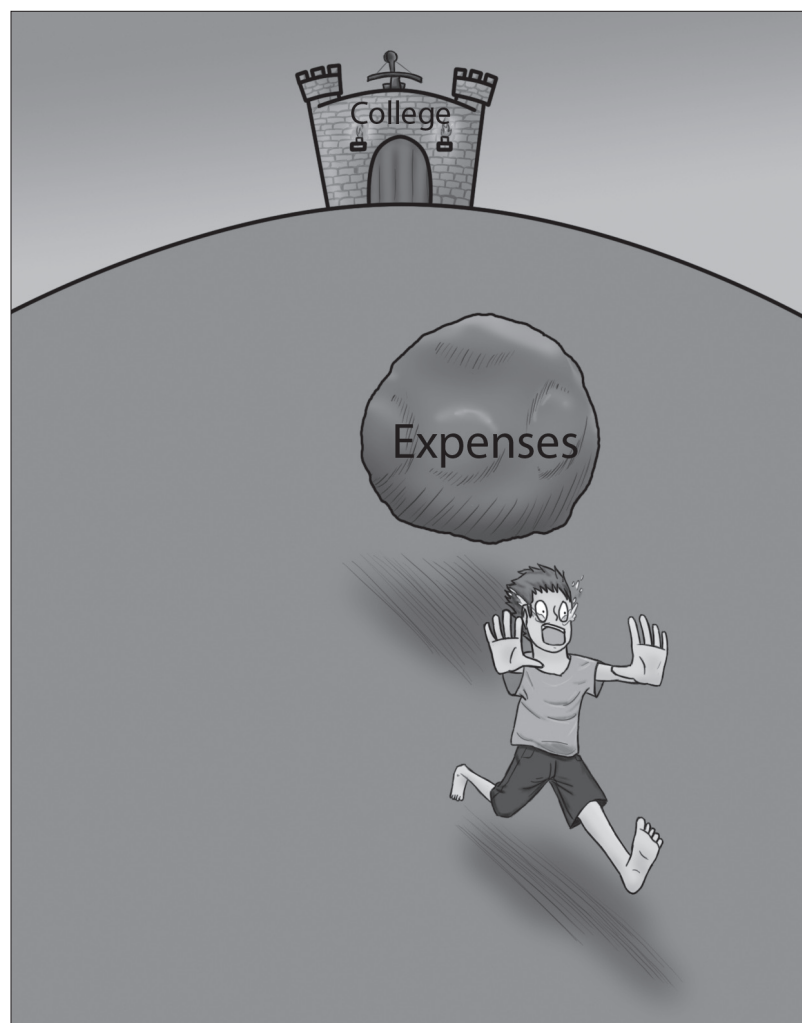
Last week, Principal Janet Anderson released a memo to the student body addressing our "civility". In the memo, she denounced student's usage of offensive words, listing explicit examples. Although the memo has had the unintended effect of adding "gypsy" and "sodomize" to student vocabulary, it also raises questions about the actual purpose of civility in school and society.

Ms. Anderson's memo encourages civility at school, but the hard truth is that life is not civil. Anderson is correct when she says, "In some ways, we have become desensitized to the true meanings of our word choices." However, this isn't a problem confined to our school. Our generation as a whole has thrown civility out the window, as we are constantly listening to racist and misogynist lyrics in our music and watching offensive shows on TV. Anderson's memo goes on to state "I am optimistic enough to think that we want to create a place in which all people are valued". And in truth, all people are valued at SPHS. Our student body doesn't hate blacks, asians, women, or gypsies, but certain conversations can seem hateful

to an eavesdropping teacher. Furthermore, the memo states that we should "be more careful to select words that promote a positive and safe atmosphere on campus." While this is a noble proposal, it seems ridiculous to try and shelter us from the outside world that we live in for the other 18 hours of the day. High school is supposed to prepare us for our future, and neither college students nor working class citizens are known for their political correctness or civility.

While a level of civility is necessary in any society, civility and political correctness should never be more important than free speech. Racism, sexism, and homophobia will exist in any free society, and a society that is truly diverse will always have social tension.

While Anderson states that it isn't her intent to legislate language, the memo hints of school intervention. In the memo, it states "An idle remark about someone's ethnic identity may seem like a harmless reference, but it may also be hurtful or demeaning or constitute harassment." The fact that the school decides what constitutes harassment is alarming, since it means that they have the power to regulate word choice. And when the administration has the ability to obstruct free speech in the name of civility, it means that civility has gone too far.



Daniel Willardson

College expenses impeding ability to succeed

By Kristin Gunther
Staff Writer

An institution of higher learning; that's what a college is. It is a fortress of knowledge that is supposed to enable students to become successful and skillful adults and provide them with the necessary skills to hold most jobs—it's supposed to prepare them for life. It seems, though, that even the basic elements of college admissions, let alone the more extensive requirements, might be high hurdles to overcome for people without adequate financial means. Simply put, there are a lot of parts to the admissions process that require money and resources and it appears that poor people are at a disadvantage.

Most students begin seriously looking at colleges during their junior year of high school, although some start as sophomores. And, unless these kids live in bustling metropolises surrounded by every type, shape, and form of college, university, or trade school they might ever want to attend, chances are students will want to explore schools in other

cities and/or states. This, already in sophomore or junior year, will require plane or train tickets or a car and gas, maybe a hotel, and other expenses of traveling, just to see schools they might be interested in.

Junior year, while accompanied by expensive visitations to colleges, is also an almost required time for students to take a variety of aptitude tests, ranging from the SAT and ACT to numerous SAT IIs. The fee for the PSAT ranges from \$13 to \$25, depending on school administrative costs. The SAT is \$45, with a \$23 late fee; the ACT can cost \$47, not including the \$21 late fee.

Most colleges require at least one SAT II, although quite a few request two or three. The cost has a \$20 base fee and \$13 for every test taken. On top of these subject tests, students who take SAT IIs are usually enrolled in AP classes and must take those test, too. The AP exam is the most expensive high school exam, and while not a requirement for college, is an advantage. This year, each AP test was \$90; therefore a multiple of \$90 for multiple tests.

If colleges don't require SAT IIs or AP exams, they do at least ask for an application, and most use the "common app" which isn't required but is encouraged to be submitted online. For students who don't own a computer or have long-term access to a computer, submitting this necessary application could be difficult. In addition, there are fees to send applications and standardized test scores to every school, too.

For a student to be successful in their aspiration of attending college, not only do they have to fulfill these mentioned requirements, but also face the competition—kids who have numerous test preps and booklets to aid them in their achievement. It's scary to think that there are students who do not possess adequate funds and resources to make their college application experience equal to those of other students. It's amazing how unequally the stage is set from the very beginning of the application process. But mostly, it's unfair that some academic applicants have had every chance in the world to succeed, while others have had very few.