

SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

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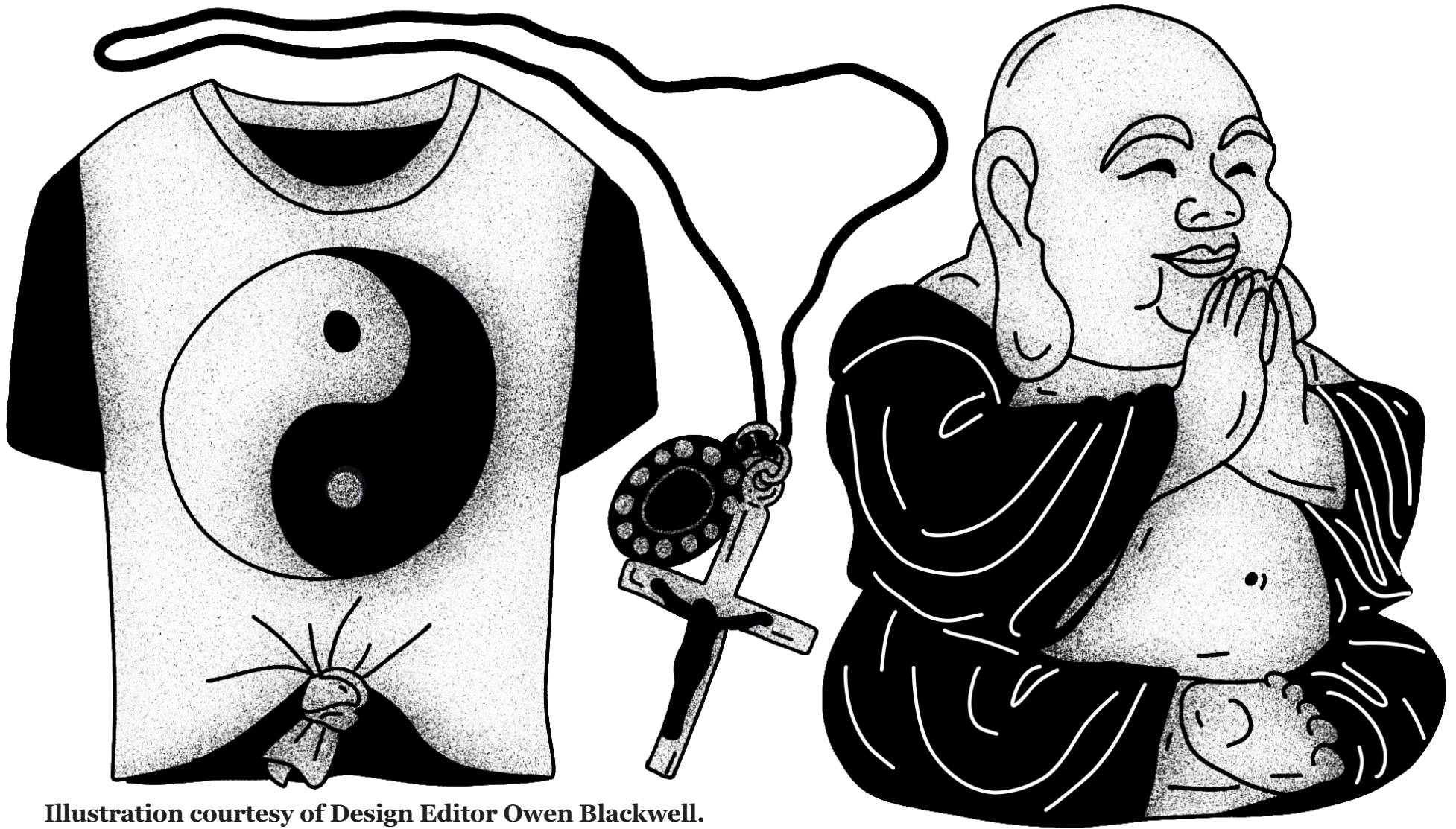


Illustration courtesy of Design Editor Owen Blackwell.

Stop Appropriating Religions for Your Aesthetic

News Editor Erika Spargo

Incense, crystals, an evil eye necklace, and a yin and yang t-shirt are staple items for a teen who embodies the popular “spirituality girl” aesthetic. Thanks to social media, this trend of utilizing pieces from largely Southeast Asian religions for the purpose of a fashion style has risen exponentially in popularity, particularly among impressionable teenagers.

Buddhism, a 2,500 year old practice, should not be dismissed and reduced to a decoration on a white woman’s coffee table in the form of a cheap plastic statue of Buddha’s face. The same goes for every other religion whose symbols have been used as accessories.

Where do we draw the line between appreciation and appropriation?

The prevalence of “borrowing” other cultures’ representative emblems dates back hundreds of years— in the 1800s, wealthy Europeans had their portraits painted of them dressed as Ottoman sultans in Turkish robes. This theme persisted in 2018, when fashion brand Gucci’s autumn fashion line featured models sporting Sikh dastar turbans, which are an article of clothing that carry immense spiritual significance for those who practice Sikhism.

For the most part, people are not accessorizing religious themes out of a place of hatred towards a group of people— it is pure ignorance. People are unaware of the significance of such symbols, and follow trends that promote them as mere accessories.

“It is harmful to others when you appropriate a religion despite not being part of it. You represent that religion to the outside world and are essentially mocking a religion that millions of people follow for the purpose of style,” said sophomore Eliza Flushman.

Thanks to money-hungry corporations that slap religious tchotchkes on products and advertise them to be “diverse” or an example of how we are all a “melting pot”, the lines between right and wrong are blurred beyond

comprehension. The issue that this creates is that people fail to look into the story behind such symbols, and instead throw the product into their shopping cart without a second glance.

A lack of awareness doesn’t repudiate the fact that it is disrespectful to people who practice these religions, especially to those who have faced marginalization for it. This raises the question of which religions are exceptions when it comes to appropriation, especially Christianity.

“Being a Christian, I often see people that I know are not Christians wearing crosses. I wouldn’t walk around wearing a shirt with Che Guevara on it, seeing as I’m not a communist. So why would someone who is not a Christian wear a cross, or for that matter, any other religious symbols that don’t represent their beliefs?” said senior Josiah McCarley.

People wear rosaries as necklaces and dress up as sexy nuns for Halloween. Many people argue that because the Roman Catholic Church has been an imperial force in the world for much of its history, it is impossible to harmfully appropriate Catholicism. But religious practitioners are not immune from exploitation just because their religion has been associated with unjust institutions or leaders.

Unequivocally, religious minorities are more likely to experience harm when people appropriate their practices.

But we cannot respond to hatred with hatred. Appropriation is unjust, regardless of who is the perpetrator or victim.

There aren’t any quick fixes to such a heavy ethical predicament. However, we should acknowledge the background of the religious symbols we see when they are used in the context of a style or aesthetic. Taking the time to learn and appreciate another religion doesn’t compromise one’s freedom of expression, and it’s a better alternative to believing we are entitled to taking what we want for our own enrichment.

Sources: europeanacademyofreligionandsociety.com, harpersbazaar.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

PEOPLE & CULTURE (Pages 2 & 3)

Why Can’t Freshmen Take AP Classes?
NASA Is Returning to the Moon
What Are Teachers Doing in Their Free Time?
Does SLOHS Even Have a Dress Code?
Who is Design Editor Owen Blackwell?

OPINION (Pages 4 & 5)

Avoid Falling for Hidden Marketing Online
Teachers of the Trimester!
Hairy Truth Behind Women Beauty Standards
Don’t Put Periods in Your Texts
Let’s Address the SLOHS Seagull Issue
Wasting Precious Time on Your Phone
Police are Farming Tickets From Students

FEATURE (Pages 6 & 7)

Paganism: An Explanation
Similarities in Religions
SLOHS is Diverse in Religions, Except Islam
Parental Pressure on Religion
Agnosticism and its Meaning
Science Does Not Disprove God

HEALTH & SPORTS (Pages 8 & 9)

What is the Tripledemic?
Super Bowl at SLOHS
What are students favorite sports
Noise Pollution in SLO
Meditation is a Superpower

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT (Pages 10 & 11)

Endless Alternate Universes and SLOHS
Older Music is Returning to Students Headphones
Quadea’s New Album Is a Masterpiece
Tyler the Creators change in Genres and Fanbase
GTA Six: Possibly the Most Anticipated Game Ever
Has “Die Hard” Truly Died?

NEWS (Page 12)

Beware: A Recession Is Near
Visit These New Shops in SLO!
Why Did We Stop Talking About Ukraine?



Why Can't Freshmen Take AP Classes?

Reporter Dante De Sio

At San Luis Obispo High School, freshmen cannot take Advanced Placement classes in their first year. While this option is available for every other grade, freshmen are left to wonder why they cannot take these classes.

"If a freshman is at the right level and ready for it, I think freshmen should be able to take APs. The rule generalizes freshmen into one group when there are obviously some who aren't being challenged enough in their classes and want to take more advanced classes," said freshman Charly Elston.

There are many freshmen on campus that would really like to take an AP class, but are upset that they can't. But what do teachers at SLOHS think? Two AP teachers offered their views on the matter.

"AP classes have the potential to earn college credit if the student does well on the exam. This means the classes are more rigorous than standard high school classes. Many freshmen are not quite ready for high school and are therefore not ready for college level work. For my pathway of Software and Systems Development which includes both of the AP courses I teach, it makes sense that students should be forced to take the introduction course Exploring Computer Science A before they jump into AP Computer Science Principles," said AP Computer Science teacher Steve Crow.

However, there are some students that would argue that the opportunities and benefits for a college course would be extremely beneficial for freshmen.

"Getting into college is more competitive than it used to be. Taking APs earlier could make the students stand out more. Allowing freshmen to take APs also lets some students get ahead; not all classes offer honors courses, meaning that it's not as challenging for certain students. It would also get the freshmen around peers who had the same interests," said Elston.

Taking AP classes can be very challenging, even if the student feels prepared.

"I think it depends on the student. We have some freshmen who are deeply prepared to take on the challenges of an AP class and should be allowed the opportunity, while others may feel wholly overwhelmed by the rigor. I think this comes with knowing ourselves and the work we are willing to put into a class. AP is a college level course and students need to understand that a huge jump is being made from middle school into AP. I think if we really take time to communicate the expectations, students should be trusted to make that decision for themselves," said AP European History teacher Kelsey Arata.

While many freshmen believe that they deserve and are capable of taking AP courses straight out of middle school, the school believes that the students must first know themselves and the big jump they would be taking to do so. While their opinions may differ, if there is one thing that is for sure, SLOHS can expect to see a new batch of AP students next year!

NASA Is Returning to the Moon

Reporter Sean Williams

Teachers and students alike at San Luis Obispo High School are both anxious and excited to see the outcome of NASA's Artemis program, with Artemis I returning safely to Earth in December 2022. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced the Artemis program in 2017, a brand new group of missions to the Moon.

"I'm very excited that we are going back to the Moon. I think it will help us gain momentum to further explore our solar system. If we are to reach other planets at the very least we need to practice with the Moon," said astronomy teacher Ryan Ritchie.

NASA's return mission to the Moon is aimed to launch a new era of space exploration and to prepare current and upcoming astronauts for the next great step: putting humanity on Mars. On December 11, 2022, NASA's unmanned Artemis I made a splashdown on Earth, proving the first mission successful. Artemis II will be the most recent manned spacecraft mission to the Moon since 1972, during the Apollo 17 mission.

The difference between Artemis I, II, and III is that Artemis I is an unmanned spacecraft that circled around the Moon. Artemis II will be manned and circle the Moon, while Artemis III will be manned and make a landing on the Moon. Artemis III will land the first ever woman and person of color on the Moon, as well as inspire upcoming generations to get excited about space exploration. It will also be landing on the lunar South Pole, an area that has yet to be explored.

"I feel like space travel is important, but at the same time it isn't, because we can have the experience of going up and what it feels like, but it might affect us in many different ways and we don't know what will happen to us," said freshman Fernando Rios.

Luckily, NASA planned the Artemis missions to have a non-manned aircraft fly into space first (Artemis I), and check if everything is correct. This way, NASA knows what to fix and if it's safe to send humans to space. NASA has also sent people to the Moon before, so the Artemis missions are not worrisome.

Artemis II is planned to launch in May 2024. Artemis III is planned to launch sometime in 2025, but of course these dates may be delayed due to problems that arise. For example, Artemis I was scheduled to launch on August 29, but instead it launched on November 16.

In the upcoming years, NASA will continue to excite all generations for the next missions to the Moon. Beyond that, future generations will be excited for the first mission to Mars, a ground-breaking achievement in space exploration. Very soon, NASA will make history once again.

Sources: [nasa.gov](https://www.nasa.gov), [space.com](https://www.space.com), [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com)

Teachers Don't Actually Live at School. What Are They Doing in Their Free Time?

Reporter Zara Sedeek

According to teachers at San Luis Obispo High School, they don't really live at school. So what exactly are teachers doing in their free time? That depends on who's answering.

From surfing to F1 simulator games, the teachers at SLOHS have a wide variety of interests. *Expressions* set out to interview teachers in order to find out what takes up the time they don't spend teaching, planning, and grading.

Expressions: What is your favorite hobby?

Geometry teacher Ethan McSwain: I have lots of hobbies. I like to play board games, I like to play my F1 simulator game, and I love to bowl, but I haven't been since I moved to SLO. My wife and I like to build LEGOs, and whenever I can get a spare 5-10 minutes to myself, I like to play chess online.

English teacher Lynnly Sainsbury: I love to hike, and I love doing all the trails in San Luis Obispo. I am doing a bit of jogging, and I'm writing a novel, so I would say writing is also one of my hobbies.

Biology teacher and water polo coach Trenton Rubio: Being outside. Doing things like surfing, hiking, those kinds of things in nature.

Expressions: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

McSwain: I love to take naps. I also do the hobbies that I mentioned before. I like to watch different TV shows, depending on the mood and how much energy I have.

Sainsbury: I usually spend a lot of time writing my novel. I try to walk and exercise every day, and I love hanging out with my grandkids. I also love going to England, I have been five times to take classes at Oxford and at Cambridge universities.

Rubio: Coaching. I'd say that's where I put a lot of my time, whether it is for water polo here at school, or club water polo, and swim season after that. So really trying to help build a strong water polo program. I also love hanging out with friends.

Expressions: How much free time do you have outside of work for school?

McSwain: I try not to do too much work at home. So, like I've scheduled time to like watch a show with my wife. Or else I'm having dinner with my family or putting my kids to bed. Or if we have guests over, it's not like free in the sense that I can do whatever I want, but it's a scheduled fun time. But actual free time where I don't have any grading to do and I don't have anything else scheduled, very rarely ever. Maybe, like I don't know, once a month I'll have a day where I don't have anything to do.

Sainsbury: My weekends are mostly pretty free, and I get home around 5 or 6pm in the afternoons. Teaching is really awesome for carving out time for yourself, if you stay organized. So yeah, free time is definitely a thing in my life for sure.

Rubio: Usually weekends and then all of our breaks. As far as taking breaks, I think that this year I am taking more than I did last year as a first year teacher. Now that I'm in two years, I'm like okay, it's okay to take a day off and have time to yourself.

So teachers' lives do go beyond teaching in the classroom, even as far as writing novels. In fact, 75 percent of students say that teachers are mentors and role models to them. So next time it feels like a teacher is getting boring, remember that the full story isn't always apparent. That is, until asked!

Source: [weareteachers.com](https://www.weareteachers.com)

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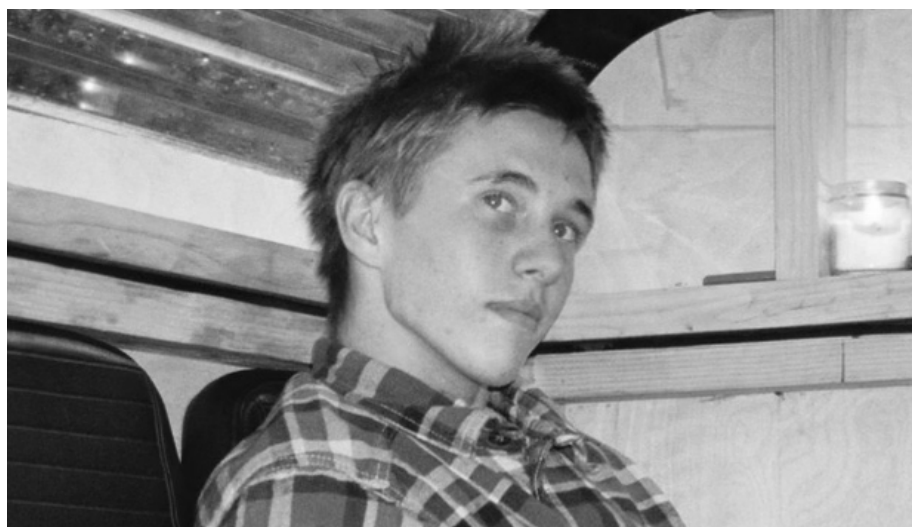


Photo courtesy of photographer Matt Hume.

Who is Design Editor Owen Blackwell?

People & Culture Editor Addi Woods

Some San Luis Obispo High School students and staff are lucky enough to know the eccentric and gifted senior Owen Blackwell. Blackwell's skills include welding, sailing, and photography. He is a leader on and off campus. *Expressions* asked Blackwell a few questions so students can get to know him a little better.

Expressions: What do you do in your free time?

Senior Owen Blackwell: I enjoy creating artwork and reading. My number one book recommendation is "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie. I like photography and painting. I also enjoy playing the ukulele. I'm a sailing coach at the Morro Bay Junior Yacht Club and I'm a petty officer in the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps. I'm a sailor, artist, welder, and I'm president of the welding and manufacturing club.

Expressions: What are your basic beliefs?

Blackwell: I would consider myself neutral on most issues. I consider myself very patriotic. I love my country and think the United States of America is an amazing place to live.



Illustration courtesy of Design Editor Owen Blackwell.

Does SLOHS Even Have a Dress Code?

Reporter Faye Niven

San Luis Obispo High School is a pretty relaxed school, as shown by its dress code. Not only are there very few rules, but the rules that do exist also have great reason to and make SLOHS a safer and more comfortable place.

"We do have a dress code, and the reason is to target inappropriate language, explicit images, images that portray drugs, drug companies, alcohol companies, and anything of that nature," said assistant principal Bernardo Salcido.

Some reasons for dress codes would be for students to fit in better. If their looks aren't a major concern and they all look the same in form of clothes, bullying might be limited and people could concentrate on classes more.

"The biggest advantage is that it provides a safe and appropriate environment for the students on campus," said Salcido.

There are disadvantages to having a strict dress code, and SLOHS chose not to have one.

"I feel like the admin knows that if there was a dress code people would just break it because the weather here is just so abnormal. You're not gonna wanna wear a hoodie when it's really hot out," said junior Shea Mercer.

Even though the admin is doing their best, the social dress code here at this school can't be rid of.

"It depends on what group you're in, but I think there is definitely a social dress code. If you're a sporty person you have to wear certain kinds of clothes, like you can't dress up too much. It really depends on what friend group you're in. Some people wear baggier clothes if they are in a certain friend group. It's like all the societal norms in that group," said Mercer.

These socially expected "dress codes" can be seen all around SLOHS. For example, a friend group of people that skateboard together likely all have very similar styles.

"I feel like people in this era are really influenced by others. Like when they see other people wear certain things then they'll want to wear it too," said senior Cynthia Hernandez.

Whatever style you like to wear, SLOHS definitely leaves a lot of freedom for expressing yourself in an appropriate manner.

Expressions: What brings you joy?

Blackwell: I believe that my joy is uncircumstantial. One example of something that's recently brought me happiness was being able to help Wellspring, a preschool in Los Osos. Their firepit was broken so I offered to take it in the back of my truck to the metal shop at school and fix it. I was able to use the skills that I've learned to help other people. I seek opportunities to help others and improve the world and love people around me.

Expressions: What are some of your strongest opinions?

Blackwell: I'm willing to have conversations with anybody, and consider all beliefs. If you're interested in my strong opinions, have a conversation with me!

Expressions: What are your plans for the future?

Blackwell: I don't know exactly what I want to do in the future, but I do know that I want my occupation to be able to help others and use my skills to benefit other people. I did not apply to any colleges because I want to do a foreign exchange program next year. I want to learn another language in another country.

A sailor, welder, sea cadet, artist, runner, and so much more. There really is no one like Owen Blackwell.

How to Avoid Falling for Hidden Marketing Online

Arts & Entertainment Editor Olivia Cusick

Advertising is everywhere in the life of San Luis Obispo High School students. Flipping through *Expressions*, students will notice advertisements throughout the pages. Ads have split television shows in half and interrupted scrolling on major social media platforms for years. Advertising has turned online content into a safe space for greed.

Take a second, reload a social media platform like TikTok or Instagram, and see how long it takes before a promoted post shows up. It usually takes two or three swipes. Most of the time, users don't immediately notice.

"Advertisements get so tailored towards stuff they know I like. It really gets me tempted to buy it, and I've definitely fallen into the trap," said senior Holly Schmit.

Seeing the rest of the advertisement spectrum takes a little more thought. Specifically, on Tiktok, social media coordinators and interns have learned how to get people talking about their brands. Language learning platform Duolingo, household cleaning product Scrub Daddy, and online slime business Peachy Slime are particularly notorious for creating branded content with others and not disclosing the promoted material.

User Generated Content (UGC) is a specific type of paid content that brands can easily get through online casting websites like Backstage or Casting Frontier. These companies can pay twenty dollars and end up with content that looks almost identical to other content created on the platform.

Content creators get extremely excited when a celebrity likes a video they created. Chances are, that video was liked by an intern or someone else within the brand. When big brands comment on creators' videos, that is intentional. Their goal is to get viewers' attention. Their goal isn't to support smaller creators, it is simply to ride off the success.

"I feel like it's pretty obvious to tell the difference between advertising and real content," said senior Lucie Plantevin.

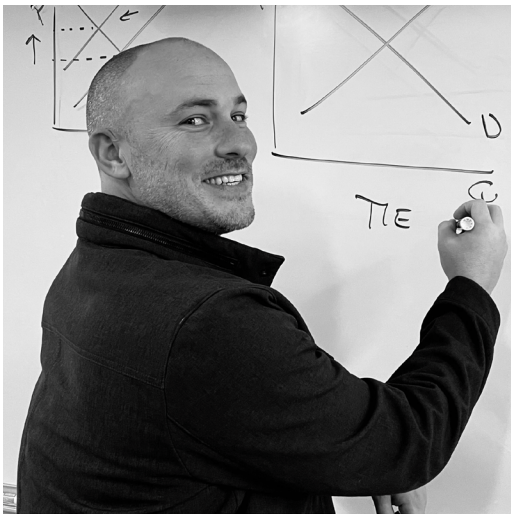
Advertising is how some people are paid. It creates new jobs and provides more money to businesses. When properly disclosed, there is nothing wrong with advertising. The problem falls into silent and manipulative advertising.

When scrolling on Tiktok or any social media, it is up to the viewer not to fall for quiet marketing. Advertising is everywhere, and once it catches the eye, the glitz and glamor of the world these companies promise begin to crumble.

Teachers of the Trimester!

Reporter Michelle Estrada

Expressions polled 130 students to learn their favorite teachers this trimester, and the votes are in. Here are second trimester's top teachers!
Photos courtesy of senior Jane Culbreath.



Economics teacher Gregory Ross



ASL teacher Kristen Nusbaum



English teacher Brian Moss

The Hairy Truth Behind Women's Beauty Standards

Opinion Editor Jane Culbreath

Girls have been taught since middle school that body hair is gross and ugly, and students at San Luis Obispo High School are aware of these expectations. Today's society is evolving towards a more body-positive, accepting culture, yet body hair is still something many women are taught to be ashamed of.

Shaving as a cultural norm dates back to the Roman Empire, where body hair was considered low class. The first women's razor was put on the market in 1915, and hair removal advertising on women was rising throughout the mid-20th century. Today, social media and older generations continue to perpetuate the idea that women should shave, and it is clearly time to allow women to make a choice about their own body hair, free of shame.

"There's been this whole image of the feminine body being smooth and having no body hair, and I felt pressure [to shave] in middle school and when I was younger much more than now," said junior Ares Aguilera.

There is widespread shame surrounding body hair, and many women have fallen victim to the idea that body hair is gross, unfeminine, or something to be embarrassed of.

"The worst part is, when someone has their own preference, they can't live in peace, because everyone has something to say," said Aguilera.

Even today, celebrities who don't shave make headlines such as "Miley Cyrus Shows Off Long Armpit Hair in Bikini Selfie," and "Fifteen Celebrities Who Forgot to Shave."

Even in articles that applaud women for their decision to not shave, these women are deemed "brave" for baring their natural hair, further sending the message that clean-shaven is the norm.

While body hair exists naturally for various reasons, it is also clear that humans have evolved past the biological need for body hair. Temperature can be regulated with a jacket, and friction and chafing can be lessened with underwear and other clothing. Because of this, the choice to shave is mainly cosmetic.

"One of my friends told me she feels like she has to shave her hair in order to be 'beautiful,' and the fact that some women think this way breaks my heart," said junior Téa Fischer.

Many women feel like they will be viewed as ugly if they don't shave, and the first step in breaking this standard is allowing women to do whatever makes them feel comfortable and confident.

"It shouldn't matter if a woman shaves or not. If she doesn't, what's the harm? And if she does, what's the big deal? Having hair on your body is normal. It's a part of being human. Women shouldn't feel embarrassed to show their hair, because everyone has it," said Fischer.

It is time to end the stigma around body hair and let women do what makes them feel their best. After all, women are not obligated to justify their decisions to anyone, and it should be a personal decision uninformed by society's standards.

Sources: feminisminindia.com, etonline.com, thetalko.com

Don't Put Periods in Your Texts. Period.

Reporter Zara Sedeek

Students and staff at San Luis Obispo High School students are punctuating their texts, and it can make them sound more aggressive or like they are tired of the other person.

"Punctuating is not at all necessary in texting. All it does is make you sound fake, and it takes forever," said freshman Jacqueline Cline.

According to a recent study, putting periods at the end of your texts makes you sound more negative, less sincere, or like you are trying to shut down the conversation. For example, there is a big difference between receiving a text that says "Hey." compared to a text that says "heyyyy"

Instead of punctuating, try putting thoughts in their own little bubble. Rather than keeping the other person in suspense while typing out a ten sentence paragraph, texting individual messages allows your friends to read

your thoughts as you type. And bonus! If punctuation is not added, then thoughts can be shared faster. Periods, commas, and exclamation marks will just slow you down. The point of most texts is to get an idea across, and it is not necessary to punctuate those.

On the other hand, punctuation can be used when texting someone you just met, or someone who is older and has more authority than you.

"If I'm trying to be more professional, I normally use punctuation and match the tone of the person I'm talking to," said freshman Chloe Elliot.

So only punctuate texts if you want to impress. Otherwise, just give your thoughts their own space and send them separately. It's faster and more convenient, so why not give it a try?

Sources: nytimes.com, binghamton.edu

Let's Address the SLOHS Seagull Issue

Reporter Adam Bolivar-Stone

At San Luis Obispo High School there are many complaints about the lunch system. There's the lunch lines, the lunch itself, the freshman and the seagulls. What's there to enjoy about seagulls? They're always begging, dirty, loud, sometimes aggressive and annoying. SLOHS students want to enjoy their lunch period and getting rid of seagulls would enhance their enjoyment.

"I hate seagulls because they [poop] on me and spread trash on campus. I'm at the pool in fifth period and I see trash on the pool cover, and the only way that could have got there was either kids or, more likely, seagulls," said senior Max Mcgraw.

SLOHS needs to redirect part of their attention from the new cafeteria building to some of the sanitary issues like the seagull infestation.

"Seagulls are irritating because they can get in your way and eat your food," said Daniela Alcon Cristos.

There are many potential solutions to the SLOHS seagull dilemma. Like Morro Bay High School, SLOHS could add a falconer or falcons to scare or kill the seagulls. Not only is this an effective way of getting rid of seagulls, but it also makes lunch period on campus more exciting.

"Everyday we see the falconer out there at lunch, and we've never seen a kill, but the falcon definitely scares them away," said Morro Bay High School junior Bennett Kelting.

A more exciting lunch period would give the illusion that the school lunch is at least adequate, therefore gaining better reviews on school lunch. At some of the local beaches there are "gull spikes" on top of roofs to make sure seagulls won't inhabit the area. If SLOHS adds spikes to all the buildings, seagull populations would decrease dramatically and prevent troublemakers from climbing on top of buildings.

Although seagulls can be a nuisance, eradicating all of them may actually do more harm than good. Seagulls are extremely important animals in coastal ecosystems as they help provide population control. Some of the seagulls serve as trash control after lunch period eating the food students litter across campus.

Getting rid of all the seagulls may be a drag, but perhaps it's time for humans to do some population control. The infestation of seagulls at SLOHS is creating a dirty campus that many students feel uncomfortable in. Getting rid of some of the birds wouldn't do any harm. Many of the solutions proposed to get rid of seagulls take care of other problems at SLOHS, therefore killing two birds with one stone.



Illustration courtesy of Design Editor Owen Blackwell.

You Are Wasting Precious Time on Your Phone

Reporter Dawson Nelson

Phones can be a very useful tool in life. There are apps for just about everything, and social media along with other utilities are only getting more and more popular. It seems like even with all of these benefits, people are not happy.

One reason may be that phones aren't as beneficial as we may think. Students at San Luis Obispo High School seem to be spending a considerable amount of time on their phones, and it is taking valuable time from their day.

Social media admiration may be more self-destructive than most teens think, possibly even contributing to anxiety and depression.

"I think school time and screen time often takes away from things that would benefit us more," said senior Ava Jacobs. It seems like SLOHS students have less time to self-reflect and find themselves submitting to the bombardment of information from their phones.

Many official institutions and hospitals recognize that social media and phone use do affect mental health. Effects such as self-esteem and social circles are heavily influenced by social media. At this point, it is irrefutable that phones negatively affect mental health.

Although uncommon, some people do not have smartphones.

"With Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter, you cannot communicate as much with people since they won't see your text immediately. I feel like having a text or call is really good," said senior Elias Stepro. Social media might not be as social as we think. No realistic immediate communication comes from Instagram, Snapchat, or Twitter, as it does from texting or calling.

So, what are the benefits?

Social media gives people a chance to portray themselves in a way they want to be shown.

"Social media makes me feel good about myself because I get to choose what people see about me and how I want to be viewed," said senior Ava Jacobs. In this way, it might be beneficiary, but it could also encourage unrealistic standards causing people to judge themselves against other people's "perfect" lives.

This will continuously lead the youth down the same rabbit hole until they learn to set their phone down and accept the reality around them, rather than the false reality on their phone.

Source: mcleanhospital.org

Police Are Farming Tickets From Students

Reporter Dawson Nelson

San Luis Obispo High School students have been pulled over multiple times for minor traffic violations. The road outside of the parking lot is not only chaotic, but it is confusing. The officers continue to give tickets without doing anything to make driving safer. What good are the laws if they don't help the people? If nothing changes, students will continue to get tickets, and the road will remain chaotic and unsafe.

Students should not be pulled over repeatedly for minor driving infractions that most adults commit every single day. It is starting to seem like students are getting tickets just for being teenagers.

"I do think they've been farming tickets a little bit," said senior Glenn Owens. Owens explained to *Expressions* his story of slightly getting over in the bike lane by the tennis courts. This road, California Avenue, separates into two lanes. It is this confusing lane that led to him and another car being pulled over for slightly touching the bike lane at the end of the road.

This is not the first time this has happened, and this is not the only location

on California Avenue where students have been pulled over in masses.

Directly outside of the student parking lot is another spot students are pulled over repeatedly. This is usually due to the same violation that occurs just yards up the road: bike lane violations.

The online perception of the police department isn't much different than SLOHS's perception. They have a Google review rating of 2.6 stars out of five and comments such as "Morons who have nothing better to do than make college kids' lives harder."

Some could say that the students deserve their tickets to make the roads safer. However, most wouldn't call slightly touching the bike lane line when merging into another lane "reckless driving."

To the police, California Avenue is a hazard. That is why they have given tickets. Throughout tickets repeatedly being given in the same location, we can assume that it is not the students' fault, but the road's. Students should not continue to be given tickets if it is California Avenue that is the hazard.

Sources: googlereviews.com, slocity.org

Disclaimer: Official Student Publications

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Paganism: An Explanation

Co-Editor-in-Chief Karl Karsh

At San Luis Obispo High School, there are many different religious beliefs among students. Students may or may not be familiar with one of these religious beliefs: Paganism.

Paganism is the ancestral religion of humanity as a whole. In the present day, the Pagan tradition manifests in both communities reclaiming their ancient sites and ceremonies, as well as individuals pursuing a personal spiritual path, alone or in a small group, under the tutelage of one or multiple deities.

"Paganism is defined as someone who has beliefs in spiritual things connected to nature and usually tends to be polytheistic (believes in many gods/deities), however, that can vary depending on beliefs. Some Pagans may be agnostic to atheist, but most are polytheistic," said sophomore Vance Waller.

Pagans have a diverse set of beliefs that don't just focus on deities. In Paganism, followers concentrate on connecting with the natural environment and treating people equally.

Junior Molly Himelblau commented on this aspect of Paganism.

"To me, Paganism is a spiritual belief that focuses on your connection to nature and yourself. How someone participates in Paganism depends on their individual beliefs and background," said Himelblau.

Being a Pagan means having a deep connection to the environment and all of the living things in the world. Pagans pursue their own vision of the Divine as a direct and personal experience, and they essentially worship the earth alongside their deity/deities.

A Pagan's view of the world is that it is a place full of joy and life. Pagans feel that every person reveres the Divine in their own way and that no specific religion is better than another.

Sources: paganfederation.org, dictionary.com, umass.edu

Are Some Religions Similar?

Reporter Che Brocco

San Luis Obispo High School is home to multiple different religions and cultures, each having their own views and ideas. These ideas can differ on many subjects but they also share a lot more in common than usually thought.

Many religions have particular places where they practice their ideas, like how Christianity and Judaism have churches and synagogues where they go to feel safe and welcome.

"I'm Roman Catholic, so it tends to be a little more strict than other religions. But a lot of modern day Catholics tend to be a little looser with the guidelines and stuff. In the Bible there is a set of guidelines. Knowing the difference between right and wrong is really the main focus," said senior Mack Garcia.

Religious holidays are another way that religions devote important days. An example is how people who believe in Hinduism celebrate Holi, a holiday that takes place in the March and celebrates the color and beauty of spring, or Vesak a holiday to celebrate Buddha's birthday which is celebrated by Buddhists all over the world.

"God tells you don't sin and major sins are like, drinking, cursing, stealing, killing people, you know- bad stuff," said junior Holly Sullivan.

Even though all religions are unique most have some form of guidelines for how to live a relatively "good" life, with many believing in a higher power who provides guidance and support. Religions can also believe in multiple gods, which is called polytheism. An example of this is Hinduism which worships around 33 different gods and goddesses.

Even though everyone has different ideas and feelings, everyone should respect each other equally because people have a lot more in common than they think.

Sources: paganfederation.org, dictionary.com, umass.edu



The Mosque Of Nasreen is a beloved part of our community. Collage courtesy of reporter Malibu Uzunlar.

SLOHS is Diverse in Religions, But What About Islam?

Reporter Malibu Uzunlar

Among all the others schools in the San Luis Coastal Unified School District, San Luis Obispo High school is the biggest in student population and earliest founded school in the school district. SLOHS unifies students from various different cultural, ethnic and of course religious backgrounds- Including ones that have come from Muslim backgrounds or have decided to convert to Islam themselves.

Expressions reached out to junior Abel Michael who has recently converted to Islam, and shine some light on his experiences with the religion and how the Muslim diaspora is being treated by the rest of our school.

Expressions: Can you give us a little introduction about yourself and how did you notice that religion was a big part of your life?

Michael: I grew up in a very Christian household, and all my family members are Rastafarian. Around middle school, I really started to connect with my religious roots and what religion in general meant to me. In high school, I got to read the autobiography of Malcolm X and discovered how Islam was a religion of racial unity and the religion for everyone. Since that day I have been reading the Quran and trying my best to educate myself on Islam.

Expressions: With the time you have spent at SLOHS, have you ever been in contact with other Muslim people?

Michael: Absolutely. We have the Muslim Student Association that meets on Fridays at lunch, which would be Juma time for San Luis. I love hanging out with them.

Expressions: How is the general approach other Tigers have hearing about your religion that might not be Muslim themselves?

Michael: A lot of my best friends from SLOHS are of Christian faith, but we were always able to have discussions about religion that all come from a place of peace and love. But generally, I do sometimes experience bias towards Islam and Muslim people, but that is just the reality of living in a Judeo-Christian Country.

Expressions: What do you think is the biggest misconception towards Islam here in the US, and before converting, did you have some of these misconceptions yourself?

Michael: I would say that the ones that stuck with me the most are two main things; oppression of women and general violence. I found out by reading the Quran further that Hijab, the practice of women covering up their bodies, is not obligatory. It is from a place of self-respect, modesty and personal choice. The Quran also condemns polygamy based on pleasure alone, allowing men to marry more women if it would let them free them from slavery based on the day's standards when the book was being brought down on the earth. Also not allowing domestic violence of any kinds, and basically to all innocent creatures. We are living in a country where acts such as 9/11 still have their effects on the society as Islamophobia, and a lot of people think we are being ordered in Islam for terrorism. These are simply just wrong, and are just stereotypes.

Expressions: If you had only 24 hours with a person and you had to introduce Islam to them, what things would you do with the person?

Michael: I would look at the person and their personal identifiers first, and try to connect it to the Theology behind Islam, you know? If someone is a woman, I would tell them about the story of Khadija or Fatima, or any other strong and influential female figure from Islam. Or what if they are an immigrant? I would tell them about the migration journey of Muhammad. I would do my best to also show some excerpts from the Quran to see if they can draw any conclusions from it for themselves. And if it's still not for them, it's not for them. I cannot force anyone into religion.

Providing a safe environment for Muslim students, San Luis Obispo High School establishes a welcoming and diverse space for Tigers of all faiths. Allah Hafiz, and may God keep you safe, Tigers!

Does Parental Pressure on Religion Negatively Affect Adolescents?

Reporter Taylor Nelson

As a student of San Luis Obispo High School I feel that parents impose a strict policy to follow religious ideals. I've personally experienced this when I was forced to confirm in the Catholic church, which I had no say in.

Most parents want students to fit into this category of perfection, and they do this because of religious beliefs and ideals that they try to force on students. Confirmation, which is the Christian practice to secure strength and faith in the church, is one of these ways that parents pressure their kids to follow religious policy.

"Sit down or your ass is grass," said my father in church.

This ancient phrase was announced to me at the mass of the first confirmation class. I was just expressing how I didn't believe in the Catholic religion, or any organized religion for that matter, and that I didn't want to get confirmed. I had no idea I would have gotten that kind of reaction from me expressing my beliefs. After all, I never got mad at him for believing in the religion.

I was never one for conflict, so from that point forward I went through the entire confirmation against my own liking. Once I got to the actual confirmation event, nearly two years after I had begun the process, I noticed that the people who are "choosing" to confirm actually have no choice and are forcefully catechized by their parents and even the bishop when he asked the adolescents if they believe in the church and its teachings.

"Your parents can answer these questions for you and the answer is yes," said the bishop.

Some people might say that parents just want what's best for their children or that religion is more important than personal beliefs, but I don't think any person, much less a child, should be forced to follow a religion or ideals that they don't believe in.

Shouldn't adolescents be the decision makers of their future when it comes to adult practices. What makes the parents have that authority over their children to the point where they feel pressure to follow the same ideals even in their adulthood?

Source: *britannica.com*

Agnosticism Has A Meaning in a World That's Full of Religion

Feature Editor Alma Tinoco

In San Luis Obispo High School, not every student identifies as religious. Those who live without devotion don't necessarily live without any form of God. There remains a question of whether a higher life form exists or not— this question is an essential part of agnosticism.

What is agnosticism? Agnosticism is a belief that the existence of God is unknowable. There can be other ways to define agnosticism, as it is not an organized religion. Many people who don't feel like they exactly align with a religion may not be aware that they fall into the umbrella of agnosticism.

"I would define agnosticism as when you have a belief, but you aren't certain of it. I'm sure that a lot of people feel really confused in their religion and so learning more about different belief systems can help them define something that they closely identify with," said junior Indiana Coetzee.

In the late nineteenth century the terms of agnosticism were introduced by English biologist Thomas Henry Huxley. Huxley invented the word "agnostic" to define people like himself who strayed from the belief of God's existence. Huxley defined agnosticism as meaning that "a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe." Agnosticism was expressed in times before Huxley through the questioning of a God and the existence of an afterlife, however it wasn't until Huxley that a full belief was introduced.

"Agnosticism can overlap with other beliefs, like atheism. Agnostic atheism is that you don't believe in a God but you can't explain why you think there is no God," said Coetzee.

Agnostic ideas can often be mistaken with atheism, which similarly rejects the existence of God. The principles of atheism and agnosticism are often confused as they share a disbelief of God, however the agnostic idea is that the existence of a higher power is unknowable, unlike the atheist idea that a God does not exist at all. Atheism falls into gnosticism, the idea that something is entirely certain. The ideas of atheism and agnosticism may intertwine at times, however the differing point in agnostic beliefs is the uncertainty in a belief of God and the afterlife.

Ideas that deviate from a set belief in God often overlap, which can further the uncertainty of what to call one's belief. According to the 2020 United States census, approximately 22.8 percent of the respondents identified as being unaffiliated with a religion. Of that percentage, four percent identified as agnostic. In the percentages of those unaffiliated with religion, the majority said they identified with nothing or simply didn't know. In the nation and in SLOHS, many might be unaware that their views on religion fall into the category of agnosticism.

Religions all rely on faith and for those who don't entirely denounce or believe in the existence of a God, they may remain uncertain on what they believe. Agnosticism is the middle ground for those who walk the line of belief and opposition to God. Views on religious ideas never just have to be one or the other— they can remain uncertain.

Sources: *findeasy.com, stanford.edu*



Illustration courtesy of Design Editor Owen Blackwell.

Science Does Not Disprove God

Design Editor Owen Blackwell

Students at San Luis Obispo High School study physics and biology, and in these courses they are taught that the most probable explanations for the world we know are the Big Bang and evolutionary theories. However scientific explanations for the world and a belief in God are not mutually exclusive.

"I'm not religious, but I'm open to anything. I don't think religion nor science are 100 percent right. Maybe we just got really lucky as a planet to have necessities for life, but something can't come from nothing. It had to have been caused by something," said junior Jackson Meyer.

The probability of the universe having the exact conditions necessary for life to exist is extremely low, pointing to an intelligent designer. The values of various physical constants are finely tuned in such a way that allows for the existence of complex, self-sustaining systems like living organisms.

What would the universe be like if the values were slightly different? What would the universe be like if a single constant were changed while the remaining constants stayed the same? The answer, to the surprise of many students, is that the universe would not be a place where life could emerge. Not just the forms of life we know here on Earth, humans, plants, and animals, but any conceivable form of life.

Evidence for a fine tuned universe can be found in the gravitational constant, which determines the strength of the gravitational force between two objects.

The gravitational constant is set to a very precise value, and if it were slightly different, the universe would be fundamentally different in a way that would make the existence of life as we know it highly unlikely.

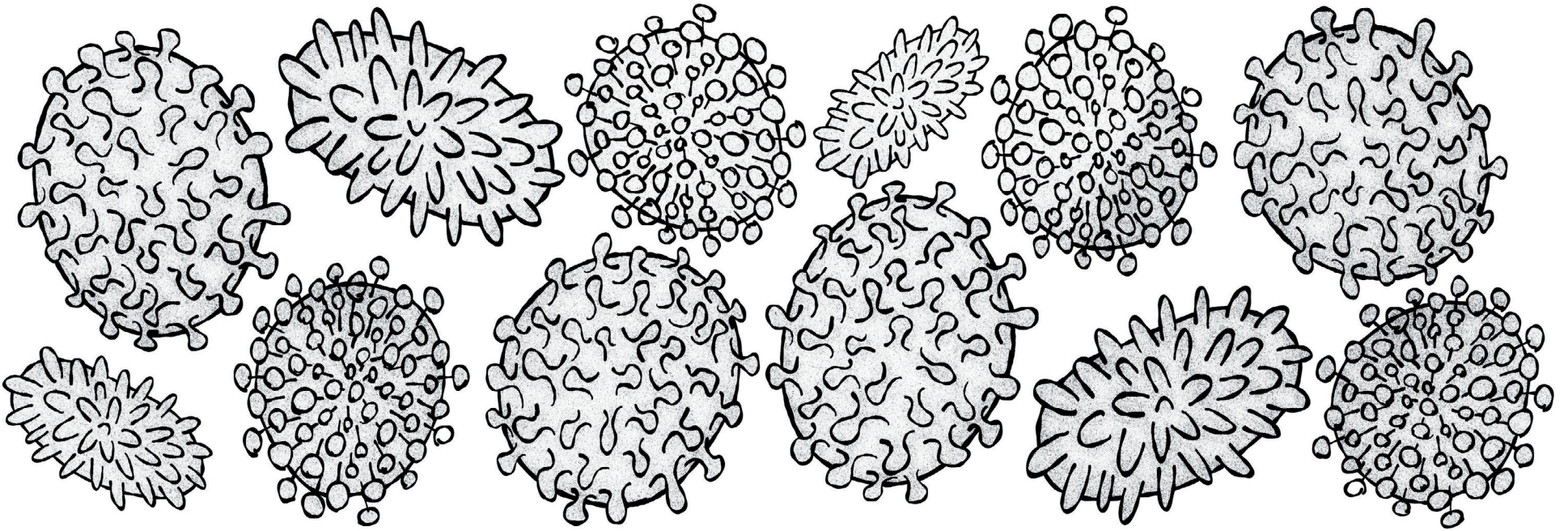
If the gravitational constant were slightly stronger, stars would be more compact and burn their fuel more quickly, shortening stars lifespan and preventing the formation of planets. If the gravitational constant was slightly weaker, stars would be less compact and burn their fuel slower, leading to a longer lifespan for stars, but preventing the formation of planets due to the lack of heat and pressure needed for planetary formation.

Opposing arguments often propose a multiverse theory, where there are infinite universes and ours just happens to have the right laws and constants produce life. Even in this multiverse, what causes universes to form?

Hedonistic indifference plagues students. Without an understanding of the universe and their place in it, students lead miserable unfulfilling lives.

Source: "The Challenge of Chance" by Klaas Lands

Is the “Tripledemic” Something to Worry About?



Influenza, COVID, and RSV are spreading this winter. Illustration courtesy of design editor Owen Blackwell.

Reporter Sean Williams

The “tripledeemic” containing RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus), COVID-19, and influenza is striking San Luis Obispo High School. It can be seen through the recent amount of absences and the increase in illness during the winter of 2022-2023.

“My wife got [RSV] and I thought I was clear from it, but I got it about two weeks later. All virus strains are different, [but] I think this is definitely something that can keep someone out a full week of school,” said health teacher Daniel Monroe.

Every year there is a season where diseases such as the flu see a drastic increase in cases, known as the flu season. This winter, the flu season came with additional illnesses, as many people’s immune systems were weakened.

RSV is a respiratory virus, meaning it affects patients’ lungs. It typically remains in someone’s body for one to two weeks. RSV cases see a rise during the fall and a peak in the winter. This winter, it was worse than usual.

RSV cases have been especially high in young children, while the flu and COVID-19 have been affecting everybody. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the highest percentage of positive RSV tests was 14.47 percent. While this may not seem like a lot,

the highest percentage in 2022 was 15.57 percent, and it was over ten percent since October 2022, and in 2021, the positive tests grew over ten percent in late November.

“My nine-month old almost had to go to the ER because he was having trouble breathing. Both of my boys have to use inhalers for the next few weeks to help clear up their lungs,” said Monroe.

The CDC lists the following as symptoms of RSV: runny nose, a decrease in appetite, sneezing, fever, coughing, and wheezing. RSV has similar symptoms to the common cold, so it may be more difficult to detect for a teenager or adult.

Since people across the globe have missed multiple flu seasons from being in quarantine due to COVID-19, the flu struck harder this winter than previous winters. This also caused many people’s immune systems to weaken from not getting sick, leaving them vulnerable to disease.

“I’m concerned because after COVID, every illness seems just a little worse,” said freshman Charly Elston.

Some people are not concerned at all about RSV, and many have not even heard of it, as it does not typically outbreak like it has recently.

Be careful when there are multiple outbreaks happening at once, nobody knows who it will strike next.

Sources: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [yalemedicine.org](https://www.yalemedicine.org)

Turn on the TV, Tigers, the Super Bowl is Back!

Reporter Dante De Sio

The Super Bowl has returned, and with it comes San Luis Obispo High School students’ predictions. With the big game just around the corner, students are voicing their opinions as everyone is wondering which team will take the Lombardi Trophy home.

The Super Bowl is arguably the biggest sporting event of the new year, and whether it’s for their team, the commercials, or an excuse to cook something special, millions tune in each year to watch, with last year’s viewer ratings surpassing 99 million people.

“I personally like watching the Super Bowl because I watch it with my family, so we can all hang out, talk about the best touchdown, or it could be us rating the halftime show,” said freshman Divanna Anderson.

As of January 27 the odds from North Jersey had the Philadelphia Eagles as the most favored team among fans to win the big game, they were trailed closely by the Kansas City Chiefs and Cincinnati Bengals, followed up by the underdog San Francisco 49ers, who were also hoping to claim

their spot at the top.

Students at SLOHS have their own opinions on who they think will win, too.

“[I think the 49ers will win] because the 49ers are the best team in football right now,” said sophomore Beck Williams.

The number of people tuning into the Super Bowl reached a peak in 2015, when over 114 million viewers watched the Patriots beat the Seahawks 28 - 24. A huge advertising method for this event comes in the form of the famous Super Bowl halftime show, which flaunts impressive names, last year’s being music artists Dr. Dre, Mary J. Bilge, Snoop Dogg, Eminem, and Kendrick Lamar who collectively starred in the first all-rap halftime show. This year singer-songwriter Rihanna is set to take the stage on February 12 for her first halftime show appearance.

Wherever Tigers are on February 12, make sure to tune in to the best way to kickstart 2023: Super Bowl 57!

Sources: [nbcsports.com](https://www.nbcsports.com), [billboard.com](https://www.billboard.com)

What Are the Most Popular Sports at SLOHS?

Reporter Jay Martinez

San Luis Obispo High School has always been heavily invested in sports, but what sports are the most popular? There is a wide variety of sports in the United States, but there’s also many sports that people have never heard of. People have been watching sports for decades and some are definitely more well known than others.

Most people watch sports in the US, and that’s no surprise. The National Football League (NFL) has about 26 million views. With those numbers it’s not a surprise that football and the NFL has the highest views.

American Football started to become more popular after 1958 in a game between the Baltimore Colts and New York Giants, they were stuck in a tie and put in a sudden death overtime with lots of back and forth gameplay. It soon became known as the “greatest game ever played.” With this, people started to watch more and more football games which soon made it into the game it is today.

My favorite sport to watch is football, specifically college [football]. It just has much more passion than the normal NFL,” said athletics coach Jack “The Eagle” Greer.

Baseball is another very popular sport in the US. It was created and played during the American Civil war in the 1840s. After the war, the soldiers loved it so much it soon became a professional sport, now having around thirty baseball teams that play every year.

“I enjoy viewing baseball due to the competitive aspect of it. It’s fun to see my favorite team go against bitter rivals. It also brings family together and we all are excited to see who wins,” said freshman Joseph Bernardo.

Sports are fun, whether it’s playing them, or watching them on the screen, and with the amount of sports in the world, almost anybody can find something that interests them.

Sources: [sportsbusinessjournal.com](https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com), [bleacherreport.com](https://www.bleacherreport.com)

Noise Pollution In The City That Can't Sleep

Health & Sports co-editor Aidan Field

Underneath the roar of jet engines and hundred-thousand pound pieces of metal flying through the sky, the students of San Luis Obispo High School and the residents of this small city are trying to get some sleep.

San Luis Obispo Regional Airport (SBP), the local airport, has flights scheduled to land and depart as late as 12:00 a.m. and as early as 5:00 a.m. The small regional airport is active throughout the night causing noise pollution. Noise pollution comes from many different places; cars, planes, loud college kids, etc. but one thing is for sure, the noise is keeping people up and harming local well-being.

"[Noise pollution is] pretty frequent and loud, but for how long it's been going on I've gotten used to it," said freshman Lynn Foote.

In the San Fernando Valley, a large suburb part of Los Angeles, the noise of busy freeways are apparent throughout the night, but the overwhelming roar of planes aren't. Hollywood Burbank Airport has a voluntary curfew which means airlines are encouraged to not fly between the times of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Even though this curfew is voluntary, Hollywood Burbank Airport sees 99 percent compliance. Hollywood Burbank Airport is a big airport compared to SLO's small regional airport, having more than seven times more flights than SLO's airport. Airport curfews are great solutions to noise pollution, but solutions can't help anyone if they aren't executed.

Noise pollution also comes from many other places in this city. The only major freeway in the county, the 101, roars day and night with cars.

"I live adjacent to the highway, on Broad Street. When people come off of the highway, they are generally going very fast. I can hear cars going by

when I am trying to sleep... Besides the occasional loud car, I don't think it really affects me," said freshman Mason Horstman.

All these factors increase noise pollution in SLO, and unfortunately they have many effects on the human body.

It's been shown that noise pollution can cause hyper-sensitivity to sound, tinnitus, and hearing loss. It can also exacerbate other diseases ranging from cardiovascular disease to type two diabetes, and cognition problems which include attention deficits and childhood learning delays.

Noise pollution can make it harder for people to sleep and it also changes one's quality of sleep. This in turn causes sleep deprivation which has even more effects on people's health and student's education.

So how can noise pollution change for the better? There are many ways to deal with noise pollution in ordinary everyday lives.

"It is also known to cause more damage if listening to headphones while already in a noisy area. I think that could be a good start for students interested in limiting their hearing loss due to noise pollution," said athletics coach and health teacher Grant East.

Avoiding noisy areas, not using earbuds, and instead using earplugs are just the tip of the iceberg, and preventing exposure to noise pollution isn't the only way to be healthy.

Residents can support curfews for airports and use less noisy forms of transport, like biking or riding the bus and taking other forms of public transportation, decreasing the amount of noisy cars on roads.

Sources: sloairport.com, flightradar.com, hollywoodburbankairport.com, hms.harvard.edu

Meditation Is a Superpower, Take Advantage of it!

Reporter Adam Bolivar-Stone

High school is a time of great stress and for students at San Luis Obispo High School, meditation may be a helpful activity towards self improvement. But, the practice of meditation is often overseen by many at SLOHS.

In a recent poll eighty percent of SLOHS students said they don't meditate. However, there's a myriad of reasons why anyone should consider adding meditation to their daily routine.

Meditation is an extremely convenient activity especially for high schoolers. There's no money needed or extra equipment. All that's needed is some free time which every person has.

Meditation has many different sub categories to fit people's needs. For example, if somebody is trying to increase their alertness, zen meditation which focuses primarily on posture control would be appropriate. Or if anyone is simply trying to reach a relaxed state, yoga meditation might be the way to go. But even with all the variants there's no exact way to do meditation. Meditation can be whatever procedure you wish.

"Usually I just sit or stretch on my bed listening to SZA and that's basically my meditation for the day," said sophomore Anika Hibble.

In the United States 14 percent of people have practiced meditation once. Within that demographic the age group most likely to meditate were ages 45-64. 76 percent of the Americans

who have meditated reported an improvement in their general wellbeing, and another 75 percent also reported that meditation helped combat their insomnia, in turn producing a better sleep.

"I meditate when [I'm not tired] to help me sleep," said freshman Luciana Bermudez.

Meditation practices can increase ones attention span and concentration, meaning that poor grades can improve. No medical prescriptions, and no weekly lessons that cost a fortune are needed. All that one needs is twenty minutes or less.

Consider it!

Sources: disturbmenot.co

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“GTA 6”: Possibly Most Anticipated Game Ever

**Reporter
Nolan Connelly**

“Grand Theft Auto (GTA) Five” was released almost a decade ago, and now fans at San Luis Obispo High School are as excited as ever for the next installment in the series. The new game has been so widely anticipated and has taken so long to develop that people had begun to speculate if the game was going to even be released.

“Honestly I’m not sure if the game is even going to come out in a sense, and if it does, I don’t have my hopes up,” said sophomore Brandon Stokes.

Rockstar, the development company behind “GTA”, posted a short GIF of their logo with retro multicolor lights on December 15. Many fans thinking this was a teaser at “GTA Six” freaked out. The tweet got almost two hundred thousand likes in just a few hours. It was later revealed that it was actually a teaser for the “GTA Five” new update.

Nonetheless, this showed just how much excitement there is surrounding the new game. One thing

that has many people excited about is the inclusion of a character of Latino background.

“One of the main playable characters is gonna be a Latina girl which has been unheard of from any of Rockstar’s games, and well I’m Latina and a girl, and I think this is really cool” said sophomore JJ Rodriguez.

However with this much excitement and attention, and with the reputation of the series there are a lot of very high expectations for the game.

“I hope we get a lot more creativity and stuff that would make the game a lot more fun and less grindy than ‘GTA Five,’” said Stokes.

“GTA Five” has successfully been one of the most popular video games for the last seven years.

While Rockstar hasn’t officially revealed much information about the game, rumors and speculations surrounding the game are plentiful and have many fans over the moon with excitement.

Sources: twitter.com, [rockstargames.com](https://www.rockstargames.com)

Has “Die Hard” Truly Died?



McClaine’s Crawl. Photo courtesy of director John McTiernan

Reporter Max McGraw

Action movie “Die Hard” is filled with terrorists and the Christmas spirit, and is one of the most widely debated movies. While the Christmas themes are present throughout, the ultimate violence throughout pushes away festive watchers. After 34 years since the release of the movie, some students at San Luis Obispo High School believe it is still a classic film.

When “Die Hard” came out in 1988, it became a resounding success. It arguably pioneered the successful action packed films of the 1980s, which along with other movies like “Predator” and “Rambo,” would become known as the pillars of action they are seen as today.

“It’s a ridiculous plot and it’s truly just out there, and I just do enjoy this movie very much,” said senior Mark Rourke.

The story follows John McClaine, a New York cop, invited out to Los Angeles for a Christmas party. As the night unfolds, a group of German criminals take

over the party in an attempt to rob the company, leading to McClaine leading a one man resistance against the group.

“Die Hard” was a success among audiences back in 1988, but has the movie stayed relevant in popular culture?

“I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that ‘Die Hard’ is a classic film, and will be continually year in and year out in spite of its age,” said English teacher Craig Stewart.

However, the Christmas spirit of the film isn’t always agreed upon.

“I think it’s okay, not the best movie I’ve ever seen and definitely not a Christmas movie, but not bad,” said junior Kaitlin Turner.

Whatever the opinion is on the film and the hot debate over its status as a Christmas movie, it’s undeniable that this film has remained in the minds of many over 30 years later.

Sources: [theasc.com](https://www.theasc.com), [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

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Endless Alternate Universes and SLOHS: The Approach Towards Fanfiction



Archive Of Our Own and Wattpad. Photo courtesy of reporter Malibu Uzunlar.

Reporter Malibu Uzunlar

Fanfiction is not a new concept to students at San Luis Obispo High School. From boy bands such as BTS to One Direction, already existing literary work, video games and basically any sort of popular and classical media, nothing is safe from the keyboards of passionate fans.

This genre of literature is also not unheard of to SLOHS students, lots of them being avid readers of certain spin-off series from popular franchises. Some even play the role of writers at some point in their lives. The most popular fanfictions fall into fictional characters, such as "Ace Attorney," "Helluva Boss," and "Percy Jackson". Interestingly, some really niche fandoms that are fairly unknown can also sometimes be the focus of some readers. The most popular genres are slowburn, angst, romance, and "one-shots," which are short stories with compact plots that readers can read in a single sitting.

"I think that fanfiction is a newly emerging art form and a love letter to the original material the fiction is based off of," said an anonymous senior.

Aside from this positive spotlight, some people might see fanfictions as something disrespectful to the original material, and even sometimes see certain works as controversial because of the fact that they are written based off of speculative scenarios and relationships between

real people. "Shipping" and "headcanons" are some of the biggest problems online and in the real world, as they allow some writers to create material inaccurate to reality which could create potentially harmful and misleading information.

The ship "Septiplier" is notorious as one of these problem couples for the fanfiction community. The pairing between Youtubers Sean McLoughlin (Jacksepticeye) and Mark Fishbach (Markiplier) approached the point of popularity where it became unclear to fans and the general public if their relationship was purely platonic. They also were forced to ask fans to respect their friendship on several occasions.

"I think fanfiction can be a great outlet for fans when they want to put their own spin into a story. It's a great way to connect with a fandom and find other people who like what you like. Shock fics are also really fun to read because they make no sense and describing them to other people is really funny," said freshman Charly Elston.

With a history filled with both negatives and positives, appreciative work for media coming from passionate fans in various artistic forms has been one of the most colorful and beloved forms of modern day fan culture. This has brought people with the same interests together and sometimes even causing life long relationships and memories to form.

Fanfiction is an art form, that deserves respect.

Older Music is Returning to Students Headphones

Reporter Faye Niven

Music is an integral part of students' lives at San Luis Obispo High School. With the rise of streaming services like Spotify, the accessibility of music has grown, making different styles, genres, and time-periods all accessible to the general public.

The demand for vinyl records has skyrocketed in recent years. In 2021, 42 million records were sold. While more modern music can still be printed on the vinyl form, it shows a clear connection to older music.

"I think music now lacks character, it's all so similar, making it predictable. Though there is still some good music. However, I like it when people can appreciate the classics" said junior Rosstyn Janni.

Older music allows for other demographics to enjoy. Music in certain decades reflects the time period they come from, like disco in the 1970s.

"I definitely prefer older music, probably because the music I listen to is a different genre than some people listen to, that being metal, and you

can't really find new stuff today as good as it was then," said sophomore Jenna Cross.

Music today is produced for a reason. Diversity within music is a good thing, and the rise of rap and pop means more outreach to new communities.

"I prefer newer music, especially rap. I like the lyrics and how it flows. I don't think there are so many differences between older music and newer music, it's just changing," said freshman Emanuel Jorgensen.

Opinions may differ, but the fact is older music is coming back. Early 2000's rap artist Eminem is one of the most listened to artists on streaming platform Spotify.

"I think every century has some outstanding artists, however I find myself always listening to 1990's hip hop/rap," said Janni.

No matter which genre of music students listen to, the options are endless. With the physical form of music coming back, so is older music.

Sources: [substack.com](https://www.substack.com), [grammy.com](https://www.grammy.com)

Quadeca's New Album Is a Masterpiece

Co-Editor-In-Chief Karl Karsh

Students at San Luis Obispo High School may be familiar with American rapper and singer-songwriter Quadeca. He recently came out with a remarkable new album called "I Didn't Mean to Haunt You."

This studio album consists of 11 different songs and is 57 minutes long in total. Unlike Quadeca's other albums, this one has a more somber meaning behind it.

"This album definitely had less prominent vocals and it overall just feels a lot more instrumental, which I appreciate," said junior Anthony Rodriguez.

Each song in this album is unique and notably has had a lot of thought put into it. "I Didn't Mean to Haunt You" as a whole covers themes of death, grief, depression, and suicide.

Quadeca's concept for this album was for it to be from the perspective of a ghost watching the world react to his death. The album is an emotional journey and leaves you thinking about the meaning of different things in your life.

"A lot of the songs feel kind of otherworldly. They have this melodramatic feeling," said Rodriguez.

The song names, in order, are "sorry4dying," "tell me a joke," "don't mind me," "picking up hands," "born yesterday," "the memories we lost in translation," "house settling," "knots," "fantasyworld," "fractions of infinity" and "cassini's division."

This album is a masterpiece, not only expressing deep emotion, but also creating a thought-provoking piece of art for everyone to listen to.

Tyler the Creator's Change in Genres Changed his Fanbase

Reporter Che Brocco

Tyler the Creator is one of San Luis Obispo High School students' body favorite artists. Tyler is known for his unique voice and creative lyrics, and he has won multiple major music awards, including a grammy for his album "CALL ME IF YOU GET LOST," and multiple other awards, including the MTV music video award, BET awards, Brit awards, and many more. Tyler's music has evolved and flourished into a completely different style, with much calmer lyrics and beats compared to his older, darker, and more intense 'horrorcore rap.' This change also changed his fanbase.

"My favorite song is probably 'A BOY IS A GUN*' because I'm a big Igor fan. I feel like it's very underrated album," said senior Josh Ellis

Tyler's older albums ("Goblin" and "Bastard") are much more aggressive with extreme language; this caused the albums to get low scores of 2.5 and 3.0 out of 5 on [rateyourmusic.com](https://www.rateyourmusic.com). Even though they have a low rating score listening to these albums shows the contrast between how his career has changed and him as a person.

A major influence to Tyler's earlier music is his relationship with OFWGKTA (Odd

Future Wolf Gang Kill Them All) a group of up-and-coming alternative rappers like Frank Ocean, Jasper Dolphin, and Earl Sweatshirt who make similar styler music to early Tyler and who is featured in many of his songs throughout his albums.

"I'll be basic and say my favorite Tyler song is 'RUNNING OUT OF TIME.' It's a really good song because of the beats," said freshman Giana Boscaro

Even though his older albums can be extreme they still deserve attention from Tyler fans because of how interesting they sound. Tyler is a master at adding a storytelling feature to his albums usually with a cast of his friends from OFWGKTA; the album "Bastard" is a conversation with Tyler's character and his counselor "Dr. TC." The album continues to be an inner monologue about his hatred towards his father who had abandoned him and his mother, and his relationship problems.

Tyler's unique voice and powerful lyrics can make him sound great in any genre and he has great potential to keep making hit songs.

Sources: [genius.com](https://www.genius.com), [rateyourmusic.com](https://www.rateyourmusic.com), [oddfuture.com](https://www.oddfuture.com)

Beware: A Recession Is Near. Here's What You Need to Know!

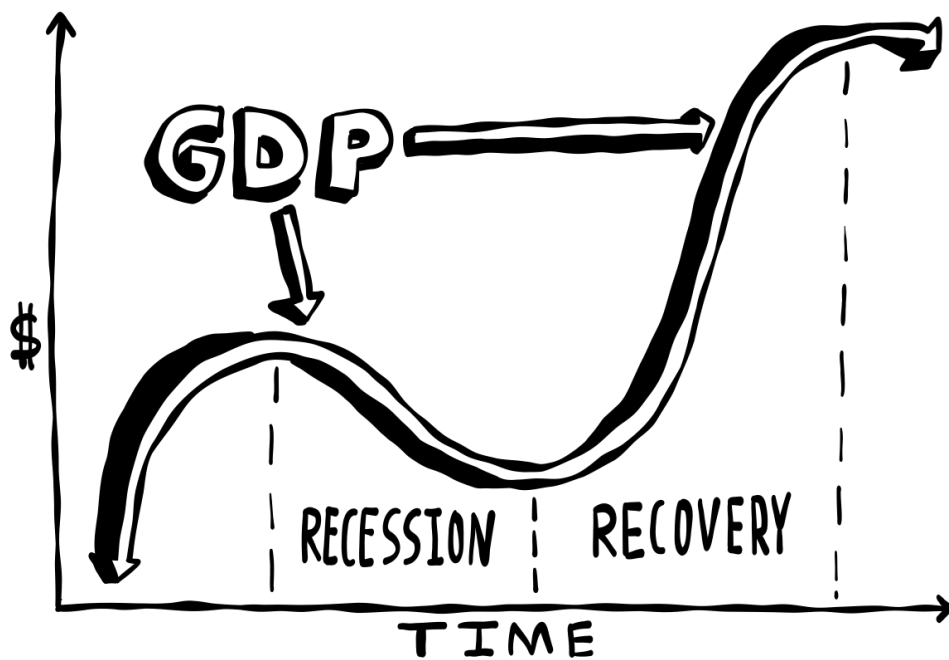


Illustration courtesy of Design Editor Owen Blackwell.

Reporter Max McGraw

San Luis Obispo High School students are some of the many people in our country prepared to join the workforce. Students will soon have to understand the inner workings of economics, starting with the fact that inflation is much higher than it should be, leading to many difficulties in their purchasing power.

As our government tries to curb inflation, there is potential for a possible recession. This has become a major concern for students, teachers, and countless Americans.

Gregory Ross leads the economic department here at SLOHS, and shared some helpful insight on the predictions of a recession.

"We are anticipating this recession because big companies like Amazon or Microsoft are starting to fire their workers. In addition to that, have you noticed that prices are higher? This can cause people to spend less, and if they spend less, then businesses have to fire more workers, which causes people to spend less," said Ross.

Teachers aren't the only ones on campus with an opinion on this topic. Regarding how our economy is undergoing this process, some students on campus shared how they feel about it and what steps might they take to change up their spending habits.

"I'm going to try and dedicate more of my income to savings and spend less on unnecessary things," said senior Atticus Fenton.

Other students share similar sentiments.

"I already don't spend money on things I don't need, so my purchasing power wouldn't really feel changed," said senior Nicholas Yuwono.

A recession is a natural part of the economic system we all live under, and after every recession, we see an economic boom.

"All of these things compound to create a nasty recession. They are often unavoidable, but the big question is not if it will happen, but when," said Ross.

The best that people can do is understand how the market works and be prepared for when it hits.

Visit These New Shops in San Luis Obispo!

Reporter Tristan Candelas

San Luis Obispo High School students are excited for these restaurants and shops that recently opened or are opening soon in SLO county.

In the past few months, multiple new places have opened in town, which students approve of so far.

The BA Start Arcade Bar on Higuera Street has become very popular among students since it opened on February 4, where people can enjoy a competitive arcade, taproom, tournaments, food, and drinks.

Wetzel's Pretzels downtown opened on August 14 and countless people have reported enjoying it after the grand opening on Higuera Street. They sell both sweet and savory pretzels as well as a variety of drinks. The unique yellow color of the walls inside the store is recognizable and creates a fun atmosphere.

"Wetzel's Pretzels is a good grab-and-go snack place, as it is very convenient and quick," said junior Titus Edison.

Greek restaurant Nick The Greek on Higuera Street opened on January 17 and serves Greek cuisine including gyros, pita, avgolemono soup, and much more, with 20+ options to choose from as well as desserts and beverages.

There are also shops that will be opening in the near future, which students are anticipating as well.

The new Crumbl Cookie is opening on March 2, and students have been anxiously anticipating for this shop to open up on Foothill. This cookie store is a hit across the country, and viral reviews of the cookies have made many people excited to try it out. Crumbl sells different varieties of cookies every week, including flavors like everything bagel, honey bun, and raspberry doughnut.

"I've been looking forward to this place opening. It is amazing, especially because they take online orders," said freshmen Jasmine Harvey.

All of these locations are highly anticipated by SLO residents and students, so go check them out!

Why Did We Stop Talking About The War in Ukraine?

Reporter Diana Pruett

Ten months into a war that has killed almost 7,000 people, and our community is no longer speaking up.

In May of 2022, 55 percent of Americans were worried about Ukraine being taken over by Russia; now, only 38 percent are concerned. This raises the question of why we are no longer speaking about a war that is still happening and affecting many.

When this conflict began last year, San Luis Obispo High School students expressed their solidarity for Ukraine, but now, everyone seems to have forgotten about it.

"I definitely think that we only talk about war when it's new and fresh. I mean, wars have gone on for years but the first few months are what Americans really care about," said ASB commissioner of wellness and inclusivity and junior Lyla Merk.

Most major news services' goals are to spread new information as quickly as possible. Eventually, topics such as the Ukrainian war are pushed to the side due to the priority of new stories.

The decrease in concern points out that our community is privileged, and often, large scale wars do not impact us. Students live fast-paced lives and events that no longer make the headlines are easily ignored.

It is often unfathomable that a devastating war can continue for such a long time with sizable aggression.

"I still expect the war to last at least another year, maybe two. Both sides still have plans and ideas to test before their expectations are likely to converge," said Professor of Political Science Hein Goemans at the University Of Rochester.

Wars are watched through news channels or movies many years later, which may be normalizing them, causing us to believe that they are regular occurrences.

"I feel that since technology has become more accessible to people, people view wars on their phones and they've been able to watch movies about war making it more normal and less foreign," said junior Camilo Baltodano.

In March of 2022, SLOHS ASB raised money for those in Ukraine but since then, the school, as well as ASB, has been quiet about the war.

"Honestly, I had no idea what happened with that fundraiser and I'm not sure what's the deal with that now," said Merk.

Instead of forgetting about such vital issues, we should remember the significance of conflicts, no matter how much time passes.

Sources: [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)

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