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CAMBRIDGE RINDGE AND LATIN SCHOOL

APRIL 2015

Talent Show Displays Students' Skills on Stage

By
Cameron Lane-Flehinger
Register Forum Editor

The Fitzgerald Theatre hosted the 5th annual CRLS Talent Showcase April 16th and 17th. This year's show made history; for the first time, students, friends, and families could watch from home using the brand-new CRLS Mediacast. Additionally, an after-school show was held at 7 p.m. on Thursday.

The performers displayed a wide array of abilities, beautifully representing the diversity of CRLS's student body.

The show was hosted by seniors Marquis Taylor and Cam Lindsay, who enthralled the crowd with their humor. Popular acts included the Haitian Club, who performed a traditional Haitian Dance. Great fun was had by everyone in attendance, including Student Government advisor Ms. Cesario, who called it an "engaging and fun tradition."



Seniors Marquis Taylor and Cam Lindsay hosted the annual talent show during 4th period on April 17.

Photo Credit: Cameron Lane-Flehinger

Costa Rica Trip

By
Paloma O'Connor
RF Foreign Correspondent

"Everything you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make," Dr. Jane Goodall told a rapt audience of hundreds of students, eight CRLS students among them.

The eight students, the winners of the 2015 Glocal Challenge, spent over a week travelling around Costa Rica this past March. Beginning with a tour around the country, the tour culminated in the Global Student Leadership conference in San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica, where Jane Goodall spoke.

"The whole trip was an incredible experience," says senior Manuel Bonder, one of the students on the trip. "It was an amazing chance to travel out of the US, meet new people, and learn about a different culture."

Junior Emily Chan, another student on the trip, agrees: "I think there's something really eye-open-

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NHS Welcomes CRLS Class of 2016

By
Stella Yeung
Register Forum Correspondent

Thursday, April 9th was the day of induction for the National Honor Society of the Class of 2016. Family, friends, current and former teachers, and staff all gathered in the Fitzgerald theater from seven to eight for the ceremony. The National Honor Society, advised by teacher Jennifer McConnell, decided to change up the induction this year. Students were allowed to invite any teacher from Kindergarten to present to come to pass off the certificates. This year there were 112 members, the lowest acceptance rate ever. Reception was held in the Main Cafeteria afterwards where everyone gathered for food and pictures.

Junior Nate Dempsey remarked, "I'm honored to be a part of NHS. It's nice to know that all of my hard work finally paid off."

The ceremony started off with four National Honor Society leaders, Amy Zhao, Sung Kang, Jo-

nah Schwartz, and Rachael Harkavy, giving speeches regarding their definitions of the four pillars of the National Honor Society. The four pillars include scholarship (a grade point average of 87), character (principles of morality and ethics), leadership (resourceful and contributive problem solving), and service

"I'm honored to be a part of NHS. It's nice to know that all of my hard work finally paid off."

(40 hours of community service).

History teacher Ms. Otty proceeded to give a speech about how although members should be proud of their acceptance, NHS should not define them. She left a message for those who didn't get into National Honor Society by reminding them intelligence is not defined by a label. She averred that it was important for students to not worry so much about the eliteness of their college and their GPA, because they can be successful regardless.

NHS Secretary Jonah

Schwartz left behind these wise words as well, "Although NHS is a label that says "good student", which is great, it lacks information, like the quality of who you are as a person."

NHS students will continue upholding the 4 pillars for the next year by maintaining strong academics, electing leaders, performing a variety of service events, and demonstrating character. It's still early, but the Class of 2016 seems to be taking its pledge to make the NHS ideals "the ideals of their school and lives" to heart.



Photo Credit: NHS

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DRINKING AGE

In the 21st century, a drinking age of 21 is absurd. The Constitution, statistics, and common sense all agree.

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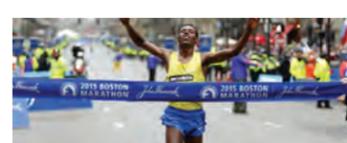
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KENDRICK LAMAR

Celebrated rapper drops eagerly anticipated new album *To Pimp a Butterfly*. It was well worth the wait.

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SPOON GAME

Rindge seniors wage savage spoon warfare for the ultimate prize: \$300 in cash. Trust no one.

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'Religion is Part of Life, and Life is Part of Religion'

An Interview With Professor Francis X. Clooney, Professor At the Harvard Divinity School

By
Shubhan Nagendra
Register Forum Editor

Professor Clooney is the Parkman Professor of Divinity, and teaches comparative religion with an emphasis on Hindu and Christian texts.

RF: *What impact did the experience of teaching high school students in Kathmandu leave on you? Was it a life changing experience?*

Clooney: Yes, it was. I finished my college studies in 1973, and went to Kathmandu to teach for two years. I went in part because I was vaguely interested in learning from Indian religions, and more broadly, from Asian philosophies.

I thought of going to India, but I was told that as an American in 1973, it would be hard to get a visa. So I went to Kathmandu, taught in St. Xavier's, a Jesuit school, where it was easy to get a visa. All the boys that I taught were Hindu and Buddhist. To teach them I had to start learning about Hinduism and Buddhism, and that convinced me that this was something worth doing in the long run. This was about learning about Hinduism, and then connecting them to my Christian roots.

RF: *What can we [high school students] learn from Hindu texts?*

Clooney: In multicultural America, more than ever before, there is a presence of people from all over the world. My impression is that for the most part the average American does not know about Hinduism, Buddhism, or Islam. We say we are against violence, and are for harmony.

So when high school students are thinking, "What I should study?" Or even "What should my profession be?" One important goal can be to learn about the religions around them. As for what Hinduism can teach us: this depends on who the "us" is. If you are Indian, then you already know a lot about Hinduism. It is very

different from the Christian traditions, and the challenge is to make good comparisons between the Hindu and the Christian. It is enlightening to think about how Hindus think differently from the Christians.

Even if someone says "I don't want to become a Hindu," there is a lot to learn here that will open one's mind. By studying Hinduism, Jews, Christians, and Muslims can appreciate better even what they believe, learning about other views of God, the meaning of life, and the mystery of death.

RF: *As young people, we see religion contributing to violence; what would be your message to us?*

Clooney: This is a real problem. As a religious person, I can't just say it is not the religion, and it is only the fanatics who claim falsely to be religious who are violent. When President Obama was talking in Washington about Islamic fanaticism, he was right to remind his listeners that Christians had this problem with the Crusades. A lot of people attacked President Obama for equating Al-Qaeda and ISIS with the Crusades. But what he is trying to say is that our tradition too had this problem.

So on one hand, don't say "all religions are peaceful; I won't even think about this problem." One of the causes of this violence is that people believe so much in their own religion that they do not have tolerance for others, so they become fanatics. On the other hand, do not write off any religion as a purely violent religion. But we are being naïve if we say religion has got nothing to do with violence.

RF: *How should we [high school students] look at religion in our lives?*

Clooney: Religion is a fact of life, no matter where they live. Religion will not disappear. And it is important to look at religion in the plural; it is not "religion," but "religions." Countries such as the United States and India have many religions alive and flourishing. It is important to not



Professor Clooney is widely recognized for his contribution to the field of comparative religions.

Photo Credit: Harvard Divinity School

fall into the stereotype that religion is private, and the public world is secular, but rather to see that good religious persons can bring their faith into their work as lawyers, doctors, or teachers. Religion is part of life, and life is part of religion.

RF: *Should schools be teaching comparative religion as a way of promoting harmony?*

Clooney: I think so. As I said, schools should teach religion in the plural. The comparative study of religions will create a back and forth among religions. It's like reading novels; you can read Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, or Hemingway. It is perfectly fair to compare novels, as opposed to saying "Dostoevsky shouldn't have written that novel, he should have written Don Quixote." That is pointless, but you can ask which one is the better story, which one you like better, and compare it to the others. But neither teachers nor students should ever reach the point where they feel they have nothing to learn.

This interview has been edited for brevity.

Email Prof. Clooney for the full version of this interview: fclooney@hds.harvard.edu

CRLS Delegation Visits El Salvador

By
Grace Ramsdell
Register Forum
Correspondent

Twenty-eight years ago, in the thick of a U.S. funded war in El Salvador, the town of San José Las Flores reached out to Cambridge for help. Cantabrigians responded to pleas from the rural community, Cambridge and Las Flores have been sister cities ever since.

A group of CRLS students recently visited Las Flores over April break. The delegation included CRLS juniors Maribel Rawson-Stone, Emma Ramsdell, and Jesse Simmons; CRLS media staff member Erica Modugno; CRLS alumna, researcher, and activist Stephanie Guirand; Amigos School music teacher Sharon Hamel; Nancy Ryan,

Cathy Hoffman, and Rachel Wyon, founders of the Cambridge-Las Flores Sister City Project.

The delegation's first stop involved a series of meetings in El Salvador's capital, San Salvador. Discussions addressed the lasting repercussions of the war and other issues in El Salvador today, including gang violence and women's rights.

In Las Flores, the delegation met with students and town officials. Hamel brought songs and letters from students at the Amigos School, and received letters and drawings in return from the students of Las Flores. Guirand shared a presentation about racism in the U.S. with community members, who in turn expressed issues their own community is facing.

Ramsdell described

this experience of solidarity saying, "I found the whole town of Las Flores, even the students, to be very politically conscious. They were very aware of the problems in their country, such as the threat of gangs and mining companies as well as a constant struggle for water and protection of resources. A lot of their problems still come from the U.S., and this trip has motivated me to do more to support them from the U.S."

Solidarity and exchange between communities is what delegations to Las Flores strive to achieve; as Hoffman put it, the delegations symbolize a "truth and reconciliation process" between the U.S. and El Salvador. With a high literacy, 100% health care coverage, and a well organized infrastructure, cities like Cambridge can learn from Las



While in El Salvador, the CRLS group met with community members.

Photo Credit: Emma Ramsdell

Flores, even though they may be many miles away.

Rawson-Stone concluded, "It was a very educational trip but also very emotional. I definitely think more students should go because it's an important experience." Simmons added, "I never realized how much the U.S. played a part in other countries and how much I have a responsibility to try and make a change."

To help raise money for the Las Flores community, the CRLS juniors on the delegation will be selling bracelets and bags made in Las Flores. To hear more from the delegates about their experience, and enjoy food and dancing, come to "Salsa for El Salvador", a fundraiser for the Sister City Project at the Amigos School on May 15th from 6-9.

The Value of College

Students Reflect on Higher Education in the US

By
Paloma O'Connor
Register Forum Editor

Few would argue that there isn't something wrong with the American education system: rising student debt, wavering employment rates, the ever-widening Achievement Gap - all symptoms of our stubbornly unequal society. High college tuition (accompanied by growing student debt) is a problem millions of students across the country face, and the question of whether to attend college, expenses and all, or to go straight into the workforce can be a difficult one.

A survey recently conducted by the *Register Forum* found that, when asked how important they thought college was in getting a good job, 5.5% of CRLS students thought it was mildly important, 41.7% thought it was important, and a majority of 52.8% thought it was very important.

This question, of course, depends on your definition of a "good job"; if a "good job" is one that pays well then, according to junior Emily Chan, a college education is very important because "all high

paying jobs except being a rock star require a degree." The numbers back this up - according to the *New York Times*, workers with a four-year college degree earn, on average, 98% more than those without.

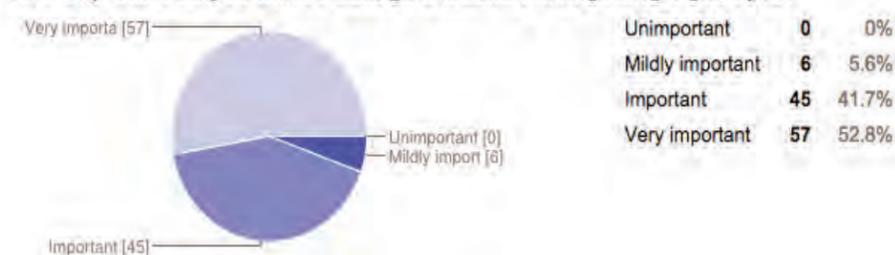
In many occupations, however, a college education is less important. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York found that, last year, 46% of recent college graduates were in jobs that didn't require a college degree. This, of course, doesn't take into account long-term job opportunities. Regardless, there remain (and will remain) jobs for which a technical education is more important than a college degree. As senior Eleanor McCartney points out, "I do not care if my plumber does not have an English degree, but I do care about how long they

"A fulfilling and productive life doesn't hinge on a college degree."

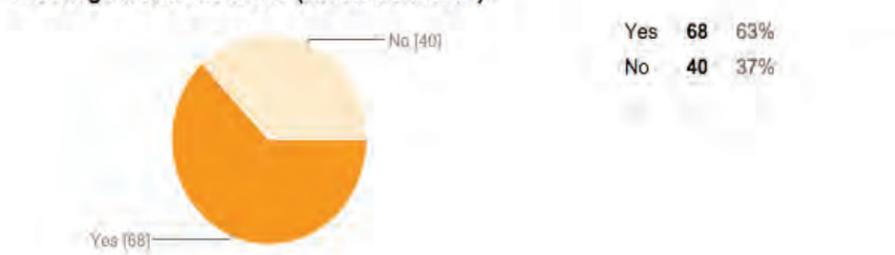
have been a plumber and if they have a license."

But, for those who want jobs that require a college education, there still remains the problem of cost. When asked if college was worth its cost, 37% of respondents answered no and 63% answered

How important do you think a college education is in getting a good job?



Is college worth the cost? (i.e. student debt)



The majority of CRLS students still believe in the importance of college.

Photo Credit: CRLS Register Forum

yes.

However, many pointed out that, even if it was worth it in the long term, college was still way more expensive than it should be. Tuition is often insanely high; as senior Kristen O'Loughlin says, "[even] with the average yearly salary, it still takes years to pay back student loans." Fellow senior Nick Singer puts it bluntly: "College has become a business."

If there was an overarching pattern to the responses to both questions, it would be, "it depends." It depends on factors like what you want to do with your life, where you want to go to school, how much

it costs, your personal financial situation, etc. If a high income's your goal, then the aforementioned statistic (college grads make almost twice as much as those with only a high school diploma) is pretty clear.

But there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution; as junior Will MacArthur says, "A fulfilling and productive life doesn't hinge on a college degree, and pretending otherwise just plays into the hands of the college-admissions industrial complex." Statistics can provide important information, but they can only tell you so much. In the end, the best decision is one that's tailored to your unique situation.

The Science of Happiness: Do We Know What It Means to be Happy?

By
Noah Beckert
Register Forum Editor

Happiness is something everyone strives for. It's advertised in everything from Coca-Cola ads to insurance commercials. Governments, companies, and parents make sure to pass down their version of the "key to happiness." However, according to recent scientific advances, society has been wrong all along.

With the emergence of humanistic psychology in 1950 and, eventually, positive psychology in 1998, science has begun to find out what makes humans happy. Findings in these fields have the potential to change societies and government structure.

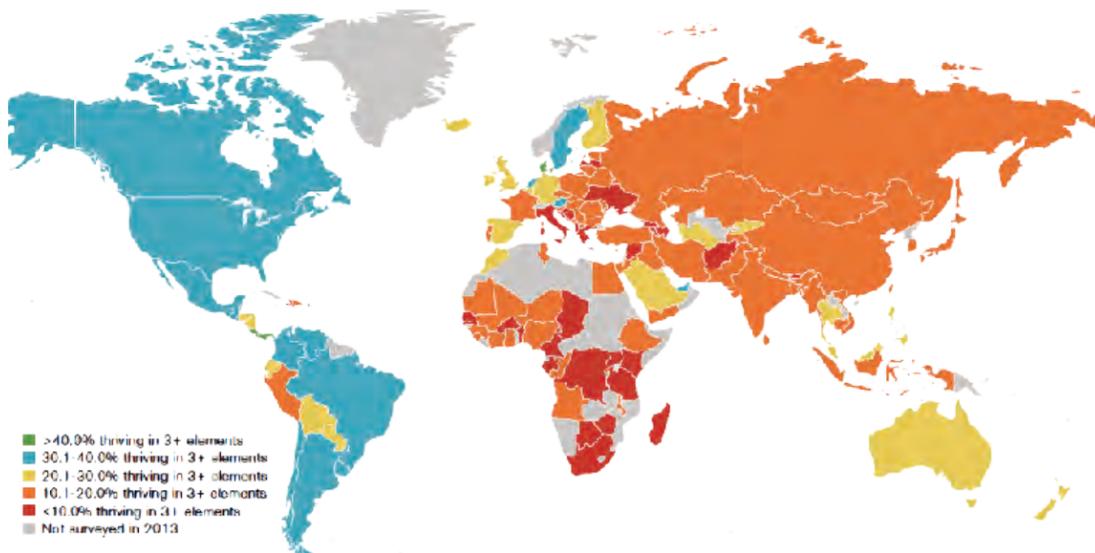
Psychologists such as Dan Gilbert, Abraham Maslow, and Daniel Kahneman have attempted to understand the science behind the centuries-old legend. Positive psychologists approach the topic of happiness with a skeptical outlook, knowing that the majority of what we think

we know today about happiness is not much more than oral history

Meanwhile, according to a recent CRLS survey, 95% of students believe that happiness is the goal in life. Yet when asked what would make them happy, many gave answers such as "down time" or "more money when I'm an adult." Positive psychology has proven that money provides happiness only up to a certain point (\$75,000). On the other hand, down time makes most people unhappy once their thoughts begin to wander, which they almost inevitably do.

In order to achieve happiness, as explained in an article written by Dan Gilbert, it is necessary to invest in experiences such as travel more than in any material possession. Eventually, humans adapt to anything they buy and no matter how happy it made them originally, it eventually will be no better than the book in the corner. Experiences, on the other hand, form memories, which live on forever.

A solid social foun-



The Gallup Well-Being Index showed little correlation between happiness and wealth on a global level.

Photo Credit: FewForChange Scholarship Fund

ation is another base for happiness. Studies have found that peak happiness occurs while in social contact with somebody we feel comfortable with. In fact, the human brain has tripled in size due to increased social capabilities.

In a survey conducted at CRLS, the *Register Forum* found no correlation between how happy somebody was generally and how much free time they had. It is important to note, though, that many who had less free time reported they were more unhappy in that

moment. Work often provides a sense of purpose and flow, as people become so immersed in work that all negative thoughts fade away. Some psychologists argue that the concept of flow does not create happiness because it is only driving us not to think about everything else in our life and instead to focus intensely on the activity at hand. Senior David Pierre adds, "At the time I am doing work I feel just a little less happy than usual, overall I believe that doing school work does not affect my happiness and

might even improve it in the long run.

People are beginning to reexamine institutions that have been in place for centuries, and reevaluate how humanity can be both more happy and productive at the same time. Positive psychology is leading the way towards human well-being and although a lot remains unclear, everyone should stay tuned to find out what will make them happy. As the Dalai Lama once pit it, "Happiness is not something ready made, it comes from your own actions."

Mandatory Voting: The Right Thing for America?

By
The Register Forum
Editorial Board

That the American electoral system is broken, or at the very least systemically flawed, should be apparent to anyone with an understanding of the democratic process. Turnouts in recent presidential elections have failed to crack 60%, and the 2014 midterm elections attracted only 36% of the eligible population, the lowest level since 1942.

The real question now is how to fix it. The solutions can be drastic: like making voting mandatory, or mundane; like moving election day to a weekend, but they must be made soon.

Recently the idea of compulsory voting has garnered widespread support, including from President Obama, who expressed interest during a town hall meeting on March 18, say-

ing “Other countries have mandatory voting... It would be transformative if everyone voted, that would counteract money more than anything.”

On paper, compulsory voting seems like a great idea, but it is likely to bring as many problems as it does remedies. First and foremost, any system that mandates participation of any kind would likely require a constitutional amendment, which would take years to draft, pass, and ratify, with a high likelihood of failure along the way.

Rather than going through an arduous political process, for what is at best an imperfect solution, there are numerous possible fixes for our elections that could be instituted easily and quickly, some of which are already on the books in cities and states around the country.

In 2010, the state of

Minnesota passed a law that allows all eligible voters “the right to be absent from work for the purpose of voting... without penalty or deduction from salary or wages because of the absence.”

The ability to take time off of work to vote would have a huge impact, by making it much easier to vote for poor and working class Americans, a demographic that is consistently underrepresented in today’s elections.

As important as changing elections are, the registration process is an even larger obstacle for many Americans. In 2012, more than 60 million Americans eligible to vote were not registered, almost a third of the eligible population. 10 states and Washington D.C. currently allow election day registration, but this opportunity must be expanded to all Americans. In no other democratic country



Register Forum editors can't wait to vote in the 2016 election.

Photo Credit: Liam Greenwell

are citizens required to register themselves to vote.

The voter registration system in the U.S. highlights the central issue in our elections; we have a culture that neither expects nor particularly encourages voting. Although we pride ourselves on be-

ing a democratic country, we have spent much more time and effort preventing people from voting than enabling them. But in the 21st century, this must change. Because while electoral reform, like voting, may not be popular or easy, it is absolutely necessary.

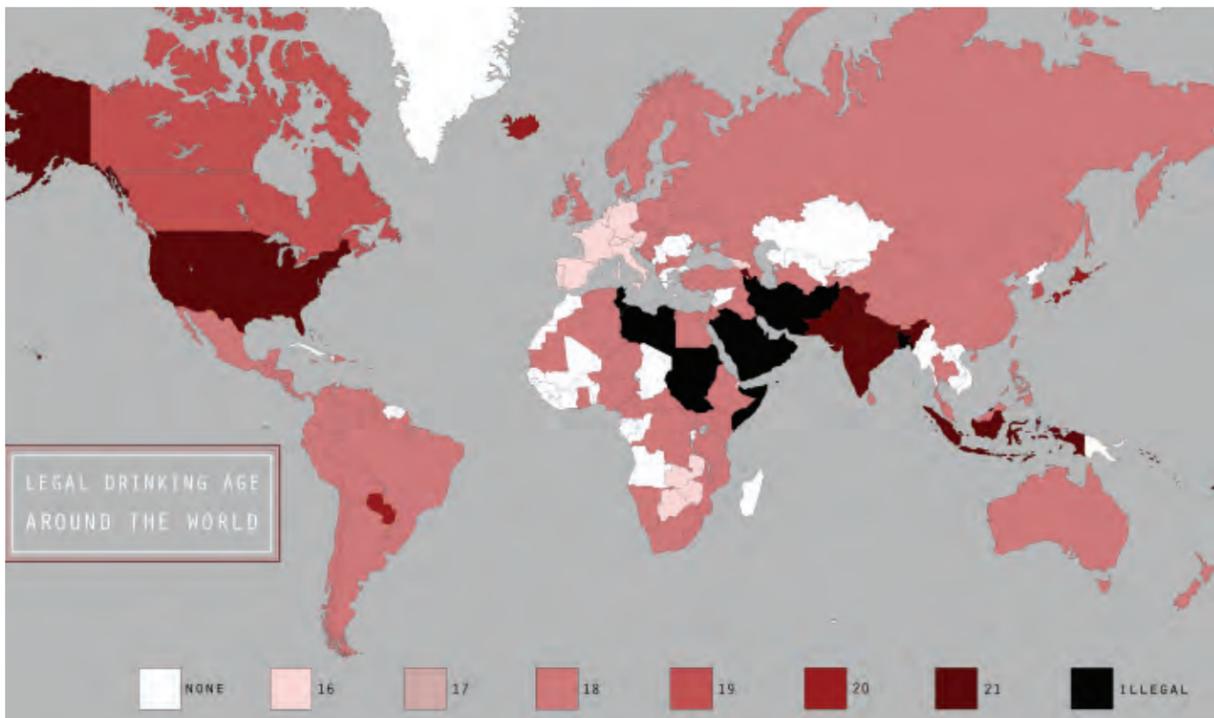
Forever 21?

The U.S. Drinking Age is Outdated and Has to Go

By
Tomek Maciak and Will MacArthur
Register Forum Editors

The Cambridge Teen Health Survey was released last month, and one statistic in particular stands out; despite the federal law, 57% of Cambridge teens have used alcohol at some point, and 35% drank in the month before the survey was taken. The numbers from the National Institutes of Health paint a similar picture: 22.7% of American teenagers have had a drink in the past month. A University of Michigan study shows that more than 8 in 10 high school seniors say that they can easily acquire alcohol. This widespread lawlessness is concerning, but it also reflects a greater truth: the antiquated regulations that set the drinking age at 21 years old are unenforceable, widely flouted, and have no place in modern American society.

Our own constitution protects us from frivolous restrictions on our right to drink. Through their use of amendments instead of legislation during prohibition, the United States Congress and the states established that statutory restrictions on alcohol for adults are unconstitutional. Furthermore, the 14th amendment states that no government can “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws,” but our own federal government did just that with the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984, which used highway funding to coerce states into abridging the rights of Americans between the ages of 18 and 21. In setting the drinking age at 21, the federal government violates centuries of constitutional and legal precedents.



The United States' 21 year old drinking age is the highest in the world for countries where alcohol is legal.

Photo Credit: New York Times

A logical restriction on alcohol that aligns with accepted definitions of adulthood is undeniably necessary, but 21 is both completely arbitrary and inconsistent with other legal standards. Americans can smoke tobacco, join the army, get married in every state except Nebraska and Mississippi, and drive without limitations, all at 18. Moreover, the 26th Amendment gives 18-year-olds the right to vote and explicitly defines them as citizens. Roper v. Simmons protects Americans from the death penalty only until age 18,

Eighteen-year olds in the US can smoke, drive, elect our leaders, and risk their lives for our freedom. Why can't they drink?

and the Convention on the Rights of the Child only refers to people under 18 as children. Legal structures at all levels of government entrust 18-year-olds with the rights and responsibilities of adulthood and citizenship. Eighteen-year-olds in the US can smoke, drive, elect our leaders,

and risk their lives for our freedom. Why can't they drink?

There is no arguing that alcohol abuse is dangerous for people of all ages, but many people seem to believe that a higher age restriction will lower drinking rates among young adults. However, all the evidence indicates that many youth under 21 drink alcohol despite the legal restrictions. The success of national anti-smoking media campaigns demonstrates that our most effective weapon against substance abuse is outreach, not heavy-handed legislation. We can and must reduce the rate of underage binge drinking, but the federal government must recognize that its current approach is ineffective, arcane, misguided, and unconstitutional.

The right of students to drink may be small, but the right to equal protection under the law and the right to a meaningful say in our democracy are not. So let's vote, and let's write to our representatives about the drinking age and policy in general. As the old saying goes, decisions are made by those who turn up.

The Challenges of Cultural Interactions

By Sarah Simon
Register Forum Correspondent

As a community, we are far more diverse than the American populace, however, we join the rest of the country in being guilty of a concept that hasn't made waves in local or national discussion. This concept is cultural appropriation.

Cultural appropriation occurs when a group of people (generally white Westerners) borrow aspects of other cultures for self-benefit. On Halloween, some don "ethnic" clothes as costumes. But the celebration ends when real Geisha paint their faces and wear formal dresses. The "ethnic" clothes uplift Americans, but that same praise is not extended to the people whose cultures are picked apart.

Appropriation requires two distinctive and opposing forces: the dominant culture and the marginalized culture. When Christopher Columbus "discovered" America, the colonists represented a dominant culture. They used force to borrow knowledge and ritual from Native Americans, positioning them as the marginalized group.

Now, White America can mass-produce tribal

print clothing, and name their sports teams "Indians", all the while maintaining systematic cultural dominance by containing Native Americans in reservations. Americans benefit from aspects of Native American culture, while Native Americans suffer because of it.

There is a fine line between appropriation, which is harmful, and exchange, the healthy give-and-take between cultures. Exchange comes from respect and understanding.

There is a fine line between appropriation, which is harmful, and exchange.

Appropriation does not value or appreciate the cultures being appropriated for anything other than self-benefit.

Iggy Azalea's ignorance towards the historic relevance of rap for black Americans is appropriation. Eminem's acknowledgement of the significant legacy of the art form is exchange. Both artists benefit from the same market, but they deviate in perspective.

The line between exchange and appropriation is not always clear cut. Yoga, for example, comes from the ancient religion of Hinduism. It was developed in the 6th Century as a method of discipline, including, but NOT limited to, the "trendy" asana poses.

These poses were created as precursors to meditation, but other forms of yoga include displays of devotion to the gods and the study of sacred Hindu texts.

This is not how we define yoga in America. Yoga here is often seen as a trend, not a ritual with a beautiful religious and historical legacy. It is a form of exercise and a way to live a healthy life. Is this appropriation? Not necessarily.

Oftentimes, the question of appropriation versus exchange needs to be examined on a case-by-case basis. A Western yogi who takes yoga as a lifestyle, incorporating the healthy breathing patterns and the calmness it brings into their lives is respecting the practice. What about someone who employs yoga for personal health benefits who hasn't accessed the religious and cultural roots of the practice? What factors determine if something is exchange or appropriation?

Because of the subjectivity of this issue, it is our responsibility to educate ourselves about marginalized cultures. We who benefit from this master narrative need to understand our personal roles in this process, and actively work to uplift, rather than denigrate less privileged peoples.

Cultural appropriation and exchange need to

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*"Listening to every voice,
printing what you need to hear"*

be added to our vocabulary and brought to the attention of the CRLS hive mind. Discussing these topics would help identify and diminish appropriation in a community that strives for

opportunity, diversity, and respect. We need to start asking where we fit into this puzzle. We need to shift the paradigm towards healthy acts of cultural exchange.

Too Many Children Left Behind: The Failure of Common Core

By Sophia Nikolayev
Register Forum Staff

Members of Congress have been plugging away recently at reauthorizing No Child Left Behind, the 2002 version of the landmark 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which technically expired in 2007.

The original purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act was to help level the playing field for students across the nation. Sadly, the law has failed to close the Achievement Gap.

As Congress turns its attention to this law, it is vital that it take the chance to make our education system one that truly provides equal opportunity for every American student.

The Common Core was supposed to usher in an era where teachers help all students learn to problem-solve and think critically. Unfortunately, the implementation of the Common Core has been wildly flawed.

Under No Child Left Behind, students are subjected to an increasing number of standardized tests with the goal of closing the Achievement Gap. But in reality, high-stakes testing is more harmful than helpful.

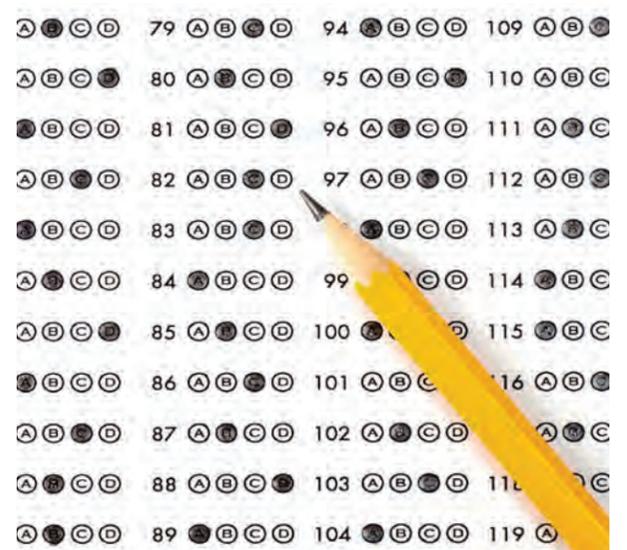
Schools across the country have changed their curriculums to increase test scores, eliminated valuable experiences like field trips, resorted to drilling test prep as a substitute for real learning, and instituted other counter-productive "reforms." The devastating truth is that No Child Left Behind in no way guarantees more resources to help struggling students, nor helps equalize educational opportunity.

Increased testing has forced teachers to "teach to the test," and, more importantly, has not benefited the very students it was supposed to help. High-stakes testing has distorted the purpose of education, diverted billions of dollars to the testing industry, and discouraged teachers.

With such a law in place, most schools have taken away time for the arts, music, etc. The quality of education for most children has been reduced just for higher test scores.

A lab at MIT found that even when students improve their scores on standardized tests, they don't always improve their cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and speed. The same goes for logical thinking and problem solving. All tests helps them learn is the recall of facts.

A student's chances of getting a good education that prepares him or her to succeed



Every student feels the Scantron struggle.

Photo Credit: District Administration

in life should not depend on what zip code they live in. The reliance on test scores alone is not a real preparation for the future. Current efforts in Congress to rewrite No Child Left Behind present a real opportunity to get federal policy right, for once. It's crucial to seize this opportunity to set a new vision of shared responsibility for a public education system that promotes opportunity, equity and excellence for all students.

COSTA RICA

Continued from page 1

ing about seeing a way of life that's so different from our way of life in the US. It's more relaxed." The phrase "pura vida", meaning "pure life", captures what Chan is saying. The country seemed far less uptight than the U.S. - more chill, in other words. These different attitudes perhaps explain why the U.S. has destroyed far more of its natural habitat than Costa Rica has.

The group got the chance to experience the awesomeness of that natural habitat firsthand when they visited the National Biodiversity Institute. Walking through the exhibits, they saw caymans (relatives of the crocodile), giant iguanas, tons of butterflies, and even a sloth.

The group saw a lot of na-

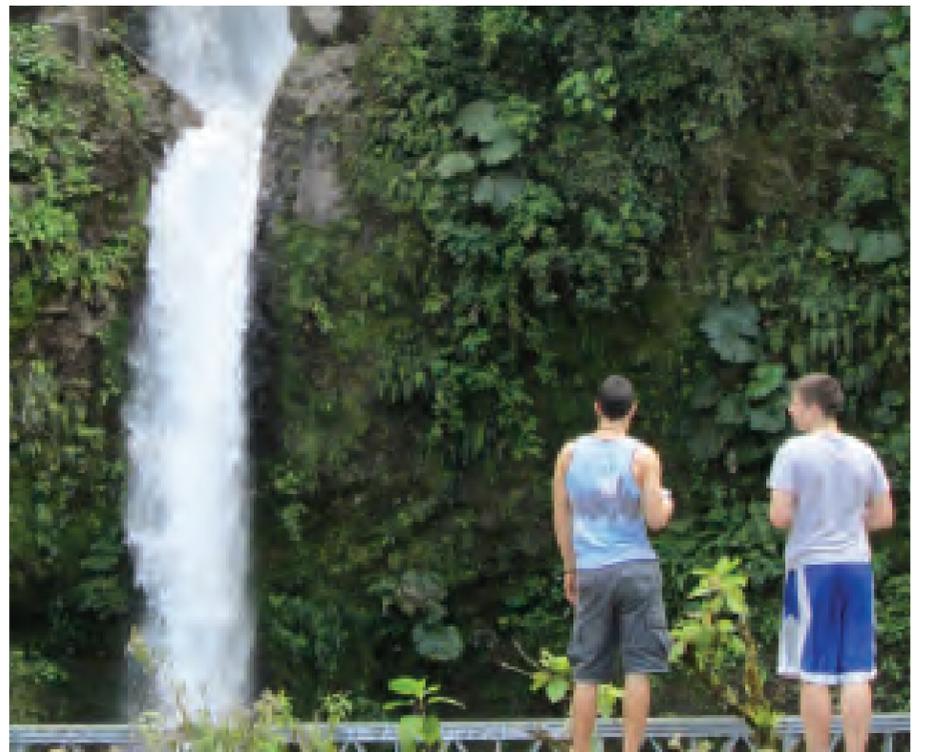
ture. On a beach, Mr. Dagher, one of the chaperones, had to do battle with multiple raccoons and small monkeys to save lunch. While on a boat, junior Lizzie Downing recalls, "we saw a 70-year-old, 17 foot crocodile named Osama. It was amazing and somewhat terrifying."

The group also had some fun. The students swam beneath the 250-foot La Fortuna waterfall and climbed over the slippery rocks, to the chagrin of the chaperones. The same day, the students went ziplining through the rainforest. It was intimidating at first, group members said, but exhilarating once you got over the initial fear. The group also toured a ranch, where they made compost, learned how a farm could be both economically and environmentally sustainable, and got up close and personal with some pig-



The fifteen travellers thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful scenery and forged close bonds.

Photo Credit: Ibrahim Dagher



Seniors Nick Singer and Nate Quigley contemplate the crashing water.

Photo Credit: Ibrahim Dagher

lets.

The students got to see firsthand what school was like outside of the U.S. by visiting a local elementary school. The group taught the kids some Arabic, danced, and played soccer with them. The visit was one of the best parts of the trip, the group concluded.

The trip was far more than just fun, however. Underlying the whole trip was the theme of environmental protection. Costa Rica is among the most eco-friendly nations on earth, recently setting a record by using 100% renewable energy for more than 75 days straight. Along that line, the students participated in a Mangrove reforestation project by replanting mangrove trees along an eroding riverbank. The long, tangled roots of the man-

grove trees keep soil in and stop the peninsula from eroding.

The trip concluded with the Global Student Leadership Summit, where the group listened to speeches by famous environmental leaders Dr. Jane Goodall and Severn Cullis Suzuki. Dr. Goodall spoke about everything from chimps to colonialism to capitalism. Inspirational doesn't do her speech justice.

The students came away feeling both more knowledgeable about environmental problems and more invigorated to find solutions to them. "In an era when we're constantly bombarded with statistics about how soon the earth's going to fall apart," remarked senior Nate Quigley, "visiting Costa Rica proved that there is hope for the future. We just have to strive for it."

Levels of Debris in the Oceans Reach Dangerous Heights

By
Mia Kucan
Register Forum Staff

Plastic ending up in the ocean has been a problem for decades, but scientists are facing new challenges as micro-plastics enter the picture. Micro-plastic is plastic that has been broken down so much that it's microscopic. This small but harmful substance threatens both life at sea and on land.

According to the New York Times, 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic are found in the oceans today, weighing 269,00 tons. The amount of plastic in the oceans is alarming, but the number of marine species affected by the debris raises concern as well. National Geographic reported that in 2014 a total of 136 species were found entangled in trash that

was dumped in the ocean.

Junior Lucas Gibson thinks that amount of plastic is harmful to marine life: "They can eat it and the food chain will be negatively affected."

This is where Micro-plastics enter the scene. The micro-plastics affect the food chain because small fish ingest the plastic, then bigger fish come along and eat the smaller fish, thus ingesting the plastic as well. Humans then hunt and eat the bigger fish. That means that humans have ingested the plastic. That is how this toxic substance has entered the food chain. The question that many people are faced with today is: why can't

"Many don't realize that the species that live in the ocean are beneficial to our survival."

the government just go and clean up the micro-plastic in the ocean?



The oceans are becoming more polluted every year.

Photo Credit: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Unfortunately, it is not that simple. National Geographic says that cleaning up micro-plastic would potentially lead to removal of plankton. That would cause problems because plankton is the basis for the marine food chain and is responsible for more than half the photosynthesis on earth.

There are some things that the CRLS stu-

dents and staff can do to help. The Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC) suggests that recycling, eliminating disposable plastics from our daily routines, and helping to clean up local beaches and wetlands would help tremendously in the long run. Sophomore Azsi De Benedictis says that after hearing the NRDC's recommendation of how to help she would definitely try to apply the

recommended methods.

Even though the oceans are in great danger many CRLS students agree that there is still time to save the oceans. Junior Joann Cassama says that "there is plenty of time. People need to be dedicated to trying to save [the ocean] because many don't realize that the species that live in the ocean are beneficial to our survival because we are all part of one big food chain."



RINDGE SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL ARTS

Dimitrius Woodson

In my week long internship at East Cambridge Savings Bank I learned many life skills in a suppressed amount of time. In the process I met a lot of people who can help me in my near future.

On my first day I met all my co-workers and I met one of my bosses who was Ms. Lisa Pacheco. She was very sweet and wanted to help us understand how banking works especially with East Cambridge Savings Bank (ECSB).

This internship may have opened new doors in my life so I don't regret it and I'd definitely tell fellow juniors to partake in it.

In terms of life skills I have learned to always make your first impression a success because you only get one. Business is confidential and if you can't make people you want to collaborate with confident that they have your trust you will not make progress. Being professional is a skill very necessary to work in a bank or any field of business.



Clockwise from top-left: Dimitrius Woodson, Eddie Casanova, Michayra Zapata, and Atianna Rodrigues.

Eddie Casanova

In terms of general life skills I have learned how to help service customers in a professionally manner. I have also learned how to be become a responsible young man.

This experience was very helpful and productive because it taught about how banks work and ways to help increase what money I already have set up in the bank account. I would recommend this course to other students because it teaches you what goes on behind the scenes of a bank and the importance of saving money.

In terms of being professional you learn the importance of communicating not just with employees but with customers, and how being presentable affects your transaction with customers and employees.

If I had to sign up for an elective I would select Bank Operations again because the more experience you receive the better chance you have at starting your very own banking career.

Michayra Zapata

I could honestly say I am grateful to work at the ECSB. Before being able to work at the bank, I had to do a training with Mr. Alvarez that involved reading a lot of papers about what to do in a bank, how to approach certain situations, and the importance of different transactions. The experience was really helpful. It gave me a great over view of how things are handled in that work field.

I would definitely encourage juniors

to take this class their senior year. It teaches you about responsibility, communication skills, professional attire, and confidentiality.

Something that I've learned from this experience is that the customer is always right and that you should try everything in your power to help him or her. The only thing I dislike about the bank is not many students go to it. I would sign up for the course again if I could because it opens many doors to jobs in retail.



Carlos Aquino

What the bank taught me this summer about general and life skills is how responsible I am going to have to be. It taught me that nothing comes for free in life and I felt like I was being treated like an adult. I felt like this experience was incredibly helpful because after high school I'm planning on getting a job and that helped me get an idea of what things will be like.

I definitely recommend this course to juniors because not only do you learn about how to count money and work as a teller, but you also learn a lot about how banks work and the pros and cons of different kinds of bank accounts.



Ayenew Belay

Working at East Cambridge Savings Bank this summer was a wonderful experience. For starters we got paid which is always a good thing, but other than that you get to meet great people, observe live tellers, go through the same training materials, and most of all learn how to be responsible.

Some key life skills I learned while working there were responsibility, management, self motivation, proper etiquette, confidence, and personal appearance. I recommend this course for all upcoming seniors because it is an awesome experience and a great opportunity to have.



Atianna Rodrigues

This summer along with working at the mall and spending time with friends and family I took advantage of a really great opportunity which was the internship at the East Cambridge Savings Bank.

Through pursuing the Seniors/Tellers internship at the East Cambridge Savings Bank, I was able to learn how to behave, and interact with people among the business realm. I've learned the life skill of interacting with people by establishing a professional as well as relatable relationship with any customer through clear concise and polite communication.

Is U.S. Public Opinion Shifting on its Relationship with Israel?

By
Diego Lasarte
Register Forum Editor

Just six days after the incumbent Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu scored a decisive victory in national elections, President Obama's chief of staff stated to an American Pro-Israel conference that the Israeli "occupation that has lasted for almost 50 years must end, and the Palestinian people must have the right to live in and govern themselves in their own sovereign state."

This quote seems to signal a change for the White House, altering its usual pro-Israel stand. Many think this shift was motivated by the tactics Netanyahu used in order to narrowly win his election, most egregious of which was his reversal on the internationally supported idea of a two state solution.

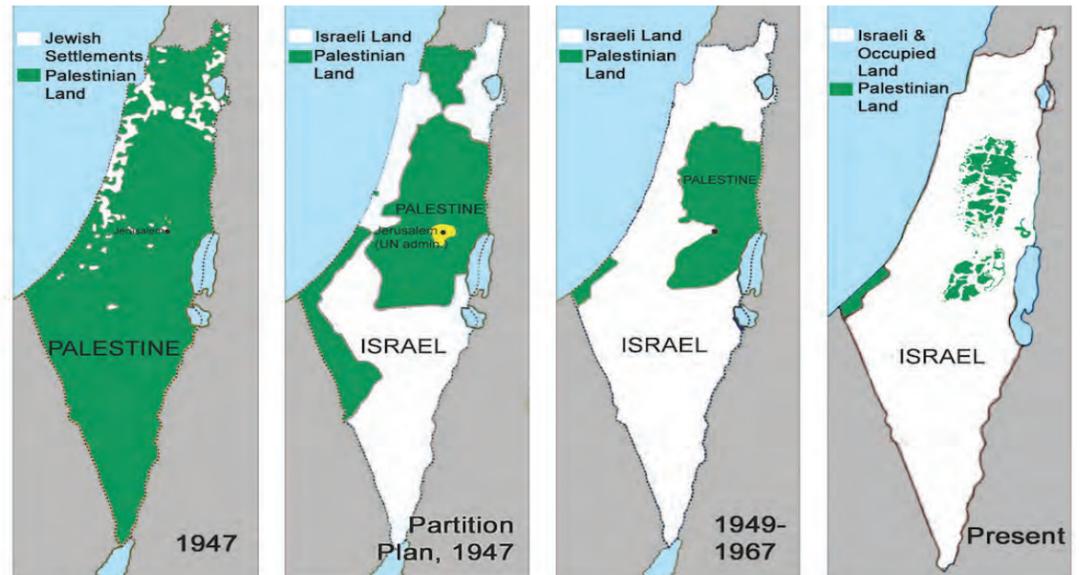
The Israeli government and Netanyahu have said for years that they support making two separate states for Israel and Palestine. This longstanding commitment has become a cornerstone of US-Israel relations. Which is what makes it so surprising that the day before the voting began, in order to shore up his conservative base, Netanyahu stated that

he would not permit any sort of Palestinian state to be created under his watch if he were to be re-elected. He also warned his supporters in an alarming tone in a separate press release on election day that "Arab voters are heading to the polling places in droves!" This rallying cry effectively showing his disdain for 25% of the Israeli population.

This provoked a strong response from the White House, with Obama's chief of staff also saying in his speech that "we cannot simply pretend that those comments were never made, or that they don't raise questions about the prime minister's commitment to achieving peace through direct negotiations," He continued by saying that the Obama administration plans to reevaluate its policy toward Israel and the Pales-

Americans [have been] showing tentative support for Palestine.

tinian territories. President Obama remained quiet for many days after the election, finally commenting "we take him [Netanyahu] at his word when he said that it wouldn't happen during his prime ministry, and so that's why we've got to evaluate what other options are available to make sure that we don't see a chaotic situation in the region."



The Evolution of the Holy Land over 60 years.

While Americans have consistently supported an Israeli point of view, there has been a recent surge in younger Americans showing tentative support for Palestine. In a recent Pew study it found that with Americans aged 18-29, only 25% said that Israel was justified in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an opinion in sharp contrast with the whole of America.

In a poll surveying CRLS students conducted by the Register Forum, it was found that students here were also at odds with the norm; 36% saying they empathized more with Palestine and 28% saying they empathized more with Israel.

Ananya Bhasin a CRLS senior who took the poll and spent a part of last

summer in Palestine, told the Register Forum that while back in the United States she has felt pressure to keep quiet about the terrible mistreatment of the Palestinians she witnessed. "Coming back and telling the stories was welcomed by many, but largely seen as a topic not up for discussion. Hostility was largely present too. What I found most frustrating though wasn't the people that attempted to belittle and oppose what I had seen, but rather the ones that didn't even want to venture into a discussion because of the baggage they affiliate with the conflict."

This waning of support for the US's relationship with Israel is coming from both sides of the issue, CRLS Junior Elizabeth Harkavy, who attended school and lived in Israel thinks

Photo Credit: If Americans Knew

that "the United States doesn't need to support Israel anymore than it currently does. The United States is a valuable ally, but that doesn't give them the right to dictate internal affairs of a country."

The main goals of Americans should be, according to Ms. Bhasin, to get educated about the subject and to listen to both sides, even while one side is much louder than the other. "Visiting Palestine this summer after living in Cambridge, I couldn't shake off the feeling that so much goes untold back home. The media never shows the poverty, water shortages, daily deaths. The Gaza war changed that to some extent, but the greatest eye opener for Americans will only come when Palestine is given the stage to talk as much as Israel"

Flying: It's Still Safe

Public Perception Undeterred on Airplane Safety

By
Shubhan Nagendra
Register Forum Editor

Co-pilot Andreas Lubitz's actions in the fateful crash of Germanwings in the French Alps in March have caused global reverberations around the safety of aviation. Experts claim airplanes are still safe, but with the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines last year, and now the deliberate crash of the Germanwings plane, questions rise about people's perception of airline safety.

Although the number of people flying in airplanes has increased -- based off of Federal Aviation

Administration's data -- the chances of fatalities on airplanes have decreased. According to America's National Safety Council a person is 180 times more likely to die in a car than in an airplane.

Even though airplanes are statistically safe, some people prefer to only travel in known airlines. Junior, Nimai Sookraj believes that he would "trust specific airlines that I've used many times."

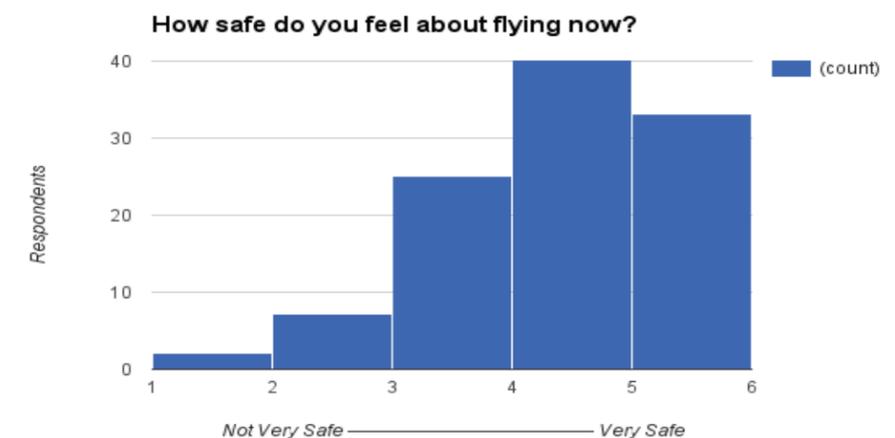
This opinion is highlighted by a survey conducted by the Register Forum, 72% people surveyed said that they feel safe flying in airplanes.

This statistic, though surprising, underscores the trust that people have in modern technology. In the survey conducted, several people justified their belief in safe

...airplanes are "Safe enough to not worry about my safety [while] on a plane"

airplanes by stating that "statistically they are safe."

Junior Alex Shulman is confident about air travel even in the wake of the recent disasters. He claims airplanes are "Safe enough



In this graph, CRLS students respond to the above question.

Photo Credit: Shubhan Nagendra

to not worry about my safety on a plane."

The Germanwings airplane tragedy also raises the question of low-budget airline safety. According to the survey, 58% of the respondents would travel in a low-budget airline.

The large percentage reflects a trust in air safety, and reaffirms people's beliefs on safe air travel.

Likewise, Junior Sebastian Kimberk, shares a similar sentiment: "I doubt that low cost airlines actually have a significantly worse track record than regular ones. For

example, Malaysia Airlines is a major airline, and they have had two major accidents in the last year. Unless a given airline has a history of accidents, I don't think it being a low cost airline will cause me to not use it."

Even though, the fatal crashes of Malaysia Airlines and Germanwings have remained ubiquitous on the news, people's perception of travelling on airplanes may not have changed. Indeed in the 21st century, air travel is prominent in people's lives; thus, the world cannot afford to change its perception on air travel.

The Race for President Begins with Texan Ted Cruz

By
Shuvom Sadhuka
*Register Forum
Correspondent*

It is far too early to call any races yet, but the presidential field for 2016 looks crowded. On the Republican side, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz officially kicked off what is expected to be a jam-packed field of contenders with a presidential bid announcement.

Rumored candidates Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush (brother of George W. Bush and son of George H. W. Bush) appear to have the early lead for the Republican nomination, while both New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry have expressed interest in pursuing the White House. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul also announced recently.

The Democratic nomination seems to be more one-sided, with most polls showing Hillary Clinton as having a considerable lead over all other rumored Democratic candidates. Despite her lead, Clinton

will receive a fair share of scrutiny during the race, especially now that she has announced. Last month, it was released that Clinton used a personal email during her tenure as US Secretary of State—a position at which security, especially cyber-security, is of utmost importance.

Senior Beau Rideout was critical of her mistake: “At that position, using a personal email is unacceptable. I still support Clinton and the Democratic party, but I definitely do not condone this type of behavior especially from a potential candidate.”

Yet the most CNN/ORC recent poll conducted after the controversy still shows her support within the Democratic party standing at a staggering 62 percent, making both Joe Biden (15 percent) and Elizabeth Warren (10 percent) look quite weak.

The scandal, however, should likely become an afterthought by the time of the election, when the voters will elect one person to the White House based on the candidates’ policies. The Republican party’s can-



Senator Ted Cruz announced his candidacy for president last month.

Photo Credit: Russia Today

didates vary dramatically in their policies, from the tea party-backed Ted Cruz to the more moderate Jeb Bush, but a consistent criticism of the Affordable Care Act and Obama Administration can be heard from them.

After Romney’s 2012 defeat, key Republican strategist Karl Rove identified the GOP’s appeal to Hispanic voters as the point of attack. However, the GOP has done little to

reverse the trend of Hispanics voting Democrat, and perhaps only hurt their

“*[It could] very well come down to Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton...*”

chances by blocking most attempts at comprehensive immigration reform.

The Democrats will likely rally around the jumpstarted economy, which has both recovered from the devastating 2008 crash and is now putting

more than 100,000 people into the workforce every month. Debate exists over the Obama administration’s role in the jumpstarted economy, and this debate will likely come into focus as the campaigns progress.

The race may very well come down to Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton, in which case a new familial dynasty would be established. For now, though, we must watch.

Can You Pass the Test?

States Weigh Civics Graduation Requirement

By
Cameron Lane-Flehinger
Register Forum Editor

As voting turnouts and political engagement levels decline across the U.S., politicians and educators alike have begun to address the role of public education in civic knowledge and participation. 10 states, including New York and Texas now require a civics test in order to graduate high school, with Utah the most recent to add such a requirement.

Massachusetts currently has no civics assessment, although all public high schools are required to provide a basic civics course.

There has been an attempt to add social studies to the slate of MCAS test subjects, but it has gained little traction with state legislators.

Freshman Jahnavi Zondervan was supportive of a potential civics requirement, saying “I think it should be a requirement because it’s important to actually know what your country does and how it works.” The U.S. has one of the lowest levels of electoral par-

ticipation among developed democracies, and proponents of a civics requirement claim that increased education and awareness would lead to greater political engagement. Junior David Watt agreed, saying “a greater understanding of the process would definitely increase people’s participation, as the significance would be clearer.”

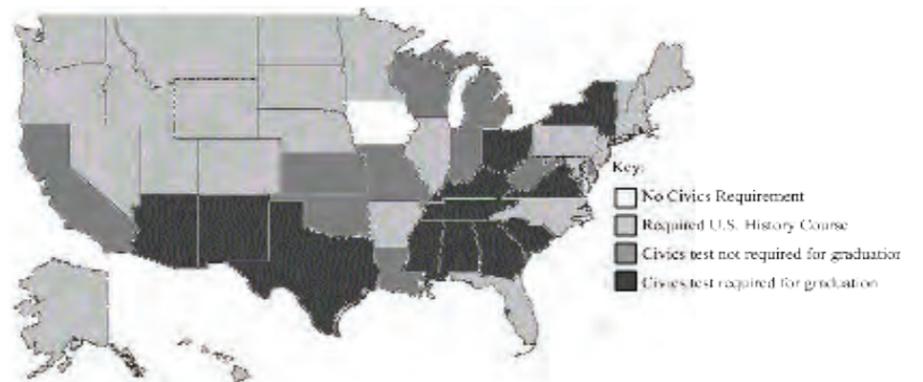
Last year Massachusetts instituted a policy mandating that a civics course be included in the graduation requirements of all public colleges in the state, but so far the idea has had little support at the high school level.

A recently conducted *Regis-*

“An effort must be made to ensure that everyone is able to participate in the democratic process.”

ter Forum survey found that CRLS students would likely be less affected by a potential graduation requirement than other schools, as 87% of those tested were able to pass the 10-question civics exam required for U.S. citizenship, com-

High School Civics Requirements by State



Many US states have begun to put in place Civics requirements.

Photo Credit: Cameron Lane-Flehinger

pared to a national average of only 50%.

Opponents of a mandatory civics curriculum on both ends of the political spectrum worry about the risks that come with endorsing an official view on sensitive historical topics, and many also question whether more standardized testing is an effective way to combat such a widespread lack of awareness.

Sophomore Catie Eiref agreed with the potential downsides, saying, “Considering history is such a broad and controversial topic, where, unlike math or science, there is no ‘right’ answer I don’t think students should be MCAS tested on it.” It is impor-

tant to consider the potential impacts that a standardized civics test could have on both school curriculums and calendars. MCAS testing already occupies the equivalent of four school days, and any additions to the testing schedule would mean a loss of valuable instruction time.

Despite the potential drawbacks, an emphasis on civic education is important for all Americans, CRLS students included, and an effort must be made to ensure that everyone is able to participate in the democratic process. Students should also be aware of any upcoming changes to the curriculum or graduation requirements of the state.

Surveys Reveal Teachers' Opinions on the Common Core

By
Adrienne Ashe
Register Forum Editor

In October of 2014, Gallup released a survey that found that a majority of the nation's teachers are in favor of the Common Core, but far fewer are in favor of the standardized tests that go along with it. A similar survey conducted at CRLS found that the teachers at Rindge held similar views.

Starting in 2010 states, including Massachusetts, began implementing the Common Core in their school districts. All but seven states now have the same standards in reading, writing, and math for each grade. Over the past few years it has been gradually incorporated into student's curriculum. For example, although Cambridge had already adopted the Common Core curriculum, they are still deciding whether to start using the PARCC exam, an assessment that is similar to MCAS but is nationwide and upholds the Common Core standards.

Gallup found that 76% of teachers were in favor of "Having one set of educational standards across the country for reading, writing, and math." 24% saw it negatively and 1% had no opinion.

About 92% of

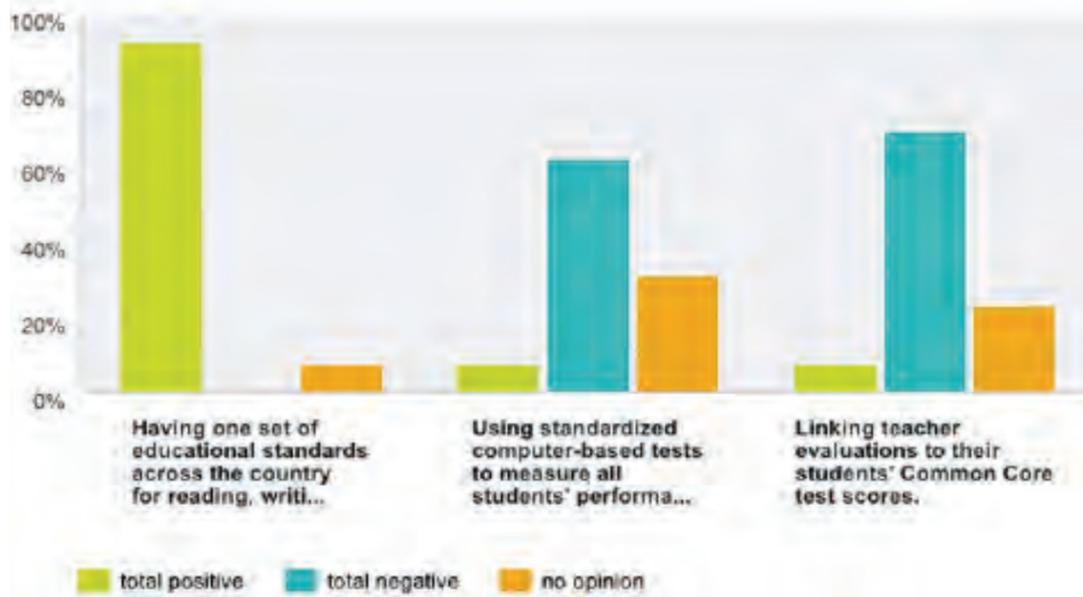
Rindge teachers were less polarized. A vast majority favored Common Core and the few who didn't held no opinion, which represents a more moderate and undecided perspective. Gallup's survey, on the other hand, showed far more teachers

how test scores would be used. 69% of teachers surveyed at Rindge strongly agreed that testing done to monitor student progress takes too much time away from teaching. Ms. Otty, a history teacher, noted that when there are more ex-

teacher creativity.

Ms. Wilhelmy, an English teacher, stresses the importance of standards, saying that they allow continuity throughout the country for college or high school students moving to different regions. "Standardized tests are an important measure of growth," she states "but it is one of many ways." Tests are means of gauging how well a student compares to others, but more importantly show how students grow from year to year. This growth can be measured in many different ways. Standardized tests do not always encompass all of a student's abilities due to several factors, such as learning disabilities, environment at home, and the rate at which students are able to learn new information. Ms. Otty says that "measuring growth is more fair."

As students, it is important to have common goals to strive for. For teachers, it is important to have the means to accurately measure the growth of their students.



A Register Forum survey shows the opinions of CRLS teachers on Common Core.

Photo Credit: Register Forum Editors

teachers surveyed at Rindge felt positive about having one educational standard. Teachers throughout the US and those surveyed at Rindge differed in the sense that

taking a distinctive, positive or negative view.

Teachers, both nationwide and at CRLS, were cautious of the standardized testing process and

ams, "more days would be devoted to testing." Teachers will also be more compelled to teach for the test, which many have speculated would result in a lack of

Save the Honeybees

The Decline of Our Planet's Pollinators

By
Wini Austin
Register Forum Correspondent

Spring is moving into full swing, promising warm weather, blooming flowers, and most importantly: bees. They might not be the most popular insects, but bees are an essential part of the planet's ecosystem. Honeybees in particular are one of the key pollinators of not only flowers, but more than one third of all our fruits and vegetables, as well as the crops that farm animals feed on.

But the world's bees are disappearing at an alarmingly rapid rate. In the last fifty years, honeybee numbers in the United States have been steadily decreasing, from 4.5 million to just 2 million hives as of 2013.

So what's happening? "Bees are dying from multiple interacting causes", explains Marla Spivak in her TED Talk, "Why Bees Are Disappearing." After World War II farmers stopped planting cover crops such as clover and alfalfa - nutritious food for bees and natural fertilizers for crops - and started growing increasingly larger crop monocultures, or "food des-

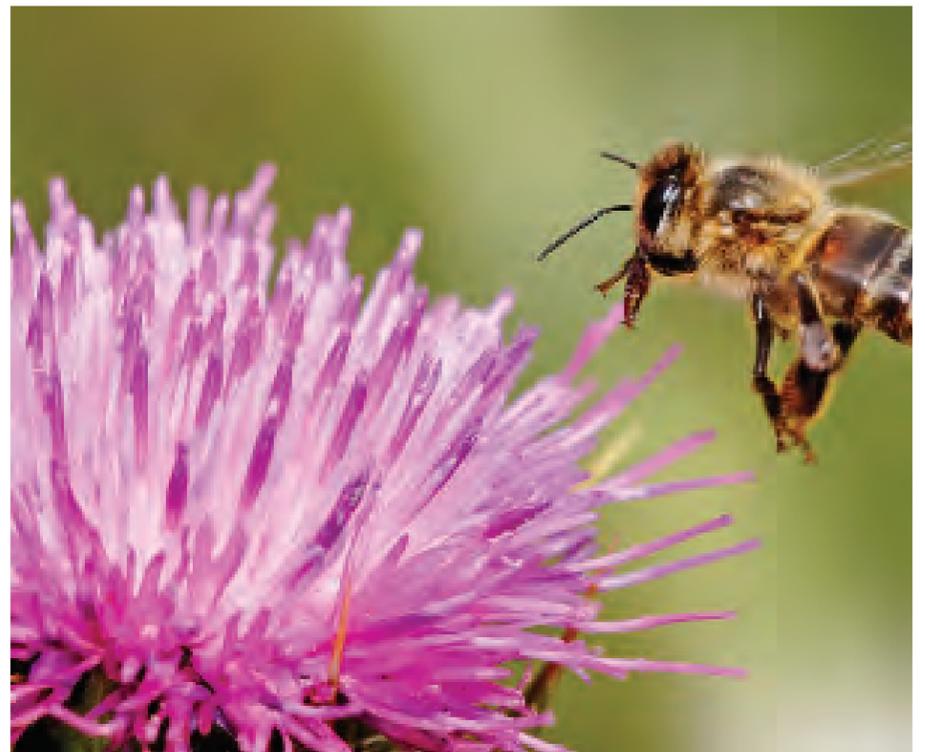
erts." Not only is there less nourishment for the bees but there has been a 300% increase in crop production requiring bee pollination. Farmers are causing the decline of honeybees while simultaneously needing more and more of them.

In 2006, a phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) was reported by beekeepers across the country. Beehives were mysteriously abandoned over the winter, resulting in losses of up to 90%. This sudden abandonment is believed to be the result of commonly used insecticides called neonicotinoids.

According to a 2014 study by the Harvard School of Public Health, neonicotinoids impair the neurological functions of a bee

"The bottom line is, bees dying reflects...a dysfunctional food system."

when it pollinates a flower with the insecticide planted in its seed. "We demonstrated again in this study that neonicotinoids are highly likely to be responsible for triggering CCD in honey bee hives that



The decrease in bee population could have a major impact on our environment.

Photo Credit: Native Plants and Ecosystem Services

were healthy prior to the arrival of winter," said Chensheng (Alex) Lu, author of the study and professor at HSPH.

Since 2006, 30% of beehives are lost each year due to CCD. While beekeepers reciprocate by splitting their hives, this steady decline cannot go on much longer.

"The bottom line is, bees dying reflects a flowerless landscape, and a dysfunctional food system," emphasizes Spivak. If bees disappeared, the majority of our food supply would cease to exist, adding up to the loss of nearly \$16 billion

worth of crops. So what can we do about it?

The good news is, it's easy to contribute to the solution. You can start by planting flowers native to Massachusetts in your garden or lawn, or petitioning for a community garden in your neighborhood. It may seem like a small solution to a huge problem, but the frightening decline of our bees cannot go on any longer. Anyone concerned about the health of our planet's bees and the future of our food supply now and for future generations can help. For us and for the bees!

While Densely Packed, *To Pimp A Butterfly* is an Incredible Achievement



By

Daniel Walsh

Register Forum Correspondent

Compton lyricist Kendrick Lamar, arguably one of the best rappers alive today, was under immense pressure preceding the release of his new album *To Pimp a Butterfly*. Lamar established himself as a force to be reckoned with in 2011 with the release of his mixtape, *Section.80*. In 2012, Kendrick shook the world of rap with the release of *good kid, m.A.A.d city*, one of the most critically revered hip-hop albums of all time. Many wondered if Kendrick would be able to rise to the occasion of putting out a superior record to both of his previous releases. Amazingly, King Kendrick was able to continue the upward trend with *To Pimp a Butterfly*.

When addressing this album, it is important to realize that while it falls under the broad umbrella of hip-hop/rap, the style of the tracks in this album is unprec-

edented in hip-hop music. Most of the tracks on *To Pimp A Butterfly* venture outside the boundaries of modern rap: lyrically and instrumentally. The funky bass-driven beat of “King Kunta” almost sounds like something out of a Bee Gee’s record. The track, an undisputed favorite among most listeners, may seem like a stage for Lamar’s endless boasts about his control of the rap game; however, Kendrick introduces some of the central themes of the album on the

track. By essentially comparing himself to Kunta Kinte, a famous slave

in the 1800s, he conveys his black pride and desire to fight for civil rights through upbeat verses and an extremely catchy chorus.

Aside from a few moments like “King Kunta”, “Hood Politics” and “These Walls”, *To Pimp a Butterfly* is by no means an easy listen. Fans who liked *good kid, m.A.A.d city* for its catchy beats and memorable lyrics may have a hard time growing to enjoy the unfamiliar sounds of this album. On the song “u”, Kendrick repeatedly screams

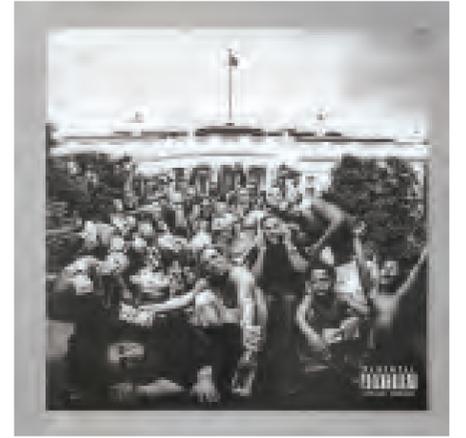
...the style of the tracks in this album is unprecedented in hip-hop music.

that, “loving you is complicated” over what seems to be a free form jazz improvisation. His first verse is littered with arrogance and insults that are directed at himself. “I never liked you, forever despised you/ I don’t need you, the world don’t need you.” About halfway through the song, there is a dramatic beat switch and Kendrick begins to drunkenly rap. This time he takes the perspective of a close friend who conveys to him similar messages as

in the first verse.

The most striking thing about this song is the sound of Kendrick downing liquor; you can hear him gulping as his lips smack the bottle. This is the most vulnerable and transparent we have ever seen Kendrick Lamar.

On the final track of the album, “Mortal Man”, Kendrick reiterates every single message that he attempted to convey, just in case you missed them. The 12-minute track features a standout verse from Kendrick. In it, he hardly breathes for four minutes, comparing himself to Nelson Mandela and questioning the loyalty of his supporters. The



Mr. Lamar recently dropped T.P.A.B.

Photo Credit: Spotify Music

verse on “Mortal Man” is as real and personal as *To Pimp a Butterfly* gets, and (without spoiling) the song has an appearance from a rapper that you may not expect to be featured.

Exiting *To Pimp a Butterfly* on my first listen, I was overwhelmed by the sheer density of it -- the album is not an easy listen. It takes time and an open mind to get familiar with the tracks on this record. However, once you are acquainted with the foreign sounds of this album, it provides you with endless listens. As of right now, Kendrick Lamar undisputedly dominates the hip-hop world with the release of *To Pimp A Butterfly*.

My Struggle: An Overwhelming Literary Masterpiece



By

Diego Lasarte

Register Forum Editor

My Struggle, like most destined literary classics, takes an idea that seems uninteresting at best and unreadable at worst and makes it into a book that slowly grips a generation of readers. In Karl Ove Knausgård’s epic memoir’s first volume, Ove takes an excruciatingly detailed description of his own life banality and transforms it into a surprisingly gripping story of the human experience and its quiet, easy-to-miss beauty.

“What seems beautiful to me,” Gustave Flaubert once declared, “what I should like to write, is a book about nothing, a book dependent on nothing external.”

While this concept eluded Flaubert, *My Struggle*, in its essence, is a book about nothing. And with a 3,600 page count, with one hundred pages

dedicated to a single new year’s eve party from his teenage years and another fifty to a child’s birthday party, most people and myself can be forgiven for our trepidation. Which is why it is so surprising at how the adjectives constantly found describing *My Struggle* are ‘addicting’ and ‘readable.’ Jeffery Eugenides, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, said to the NYT book review

that he understood why some readers approach *My Struggle* warily. He did so himself. “I thought it was going to be some kind of dour Scandinavian novel,” he said. “But I had the wrong impression. Most people are just as surprised as I was that they are captivated.”

What makes *My Struggle* so captivating is its unabashed look at some of our hidden and not-so-great qualities. Qualities that end up accounting for much of who we are. And Karl Ove talks about these particulars with detail and an honesty unparalleled, I think, by any other writer of our time. He delves so deeply into all the mundane and the unmentionable that he seemingly transcends its vapidness and makes it into something actually meaningful. The book also effectively uses these hyperrealistic scenes to delve into meditations on a day in an unassuming Nordic life. Because of

“For the heart, life is simple: it beats for as long as it can. Then it stops.”

all this expatiating on the unexceptional, reading *My Struggle* could be compared to the experience of a Sunday in which you have nothing you are rushing to do, and you are forced to putter around your home thinking more deeply than one should about how you need to clean out your refrigerator or of the inevitability of the sun exploding.

To try and sum up the ex-



My Struggle’s Author, Karl Ove Knausgård, walks.

Photo Credit: Kultur Og Underholdning

perience of reading *My Struggle*, I found Karl Ove’s main motivation is to describe the non-described. He begins the book with a fifteen page essay about death as if he is trying to remind us that there is an end to it all - a theme of the book and something that he seems to think we have forgotten. *My Struggle*, in its entirety, is almost a eulogy for a person’s potential, reminding us that while our life is made up of amazing things, those amazing things

should not make up our life. In fact, these other unremarkable moments of our life are something we should marvel at, because hidden within them lies all that we can possibly experience. It is a phenomenon that Richard Linklater and Proust before him have obsessed over, a form of immediate self-consciousness in which one manages to reflect on ones life as it is happening instead

of others reflecting on your life after it is over.

This book is having and will continue to have such a profound impact on its readers because it is a mirror that honestly reflects who we are. And while at points, *My Struggle* may seem to be acting as a funhouse mirror, I would go as far as to say that anyone who reads this book will clearly see themselves within the pages.

The beauty of this all is as far as I can tell Knausgård did not write this to have a ‘profound impact’ on the world. He certainly did not mean for it to become the sensation that it is, seeing as the first printing was only for one thousand copies. No, he just wrote what he saw and what he thought. And I think, to Karl Ove it’s not at all complicated. “For the heart, life is simple: it beats for as long as it can. Then it stops.”

Boston Marathoners of All Levels Battle it Out for the 119th Time

By
Adrienne Ashe
Register Forum Editor

On April 20th the city of Boston kicked off the 119th Boston Marathon, an event that dates back to 1897. 27,165 men and women participated in and celebrated the long standing tradition by traveling 26.2 miles on nothing but handcycles, wheelchairs, or their own two feet.

The day started at 8:50 in the morning when the mobility impaired start the race, followed by the wheelchairs at 9:17 and the handcycles at 9:22. The elite women started their long day at 9:32 in morning and the elite men released one of their four waves every 25 minutes, beginning 10:00. Each runner has qualified for the marathon. They're marathon time is submitted and for the elite men, the faster qualifying time, the earlier the wave they are in. The qualifying time ensures a higher rate of finishers, knowing that more people have the fitness to run a marathon within a reasonable amount of time. People of different ages and genders are held to different qualifying times. For example men between the ages 18 and 34 must run a marathon in 3 hours and 5 minutes or less, while women of the same age have to run it in 3 hours and 35 minutes. However men in the 55 to 59 age group have 3 hours and 40 minutes.



Thousands of runners made their way through the streets of Boston on a rainy Patriots' Day.
Photo Credit: Adrienne Ashe

Early in the race the pack of thousands of women was whittled down to just eleven women, with Desiree Linden, the runner-up of the 2011 Boston Marathon, leading the pack and giving hope that an American women would win for the first time in 30 years. Her fanbase grew more excited and assured when she remained strong through the Newton hills, culminating in Heartbreak Hill. The hills of Newton are known for being long and steep. A runner can easily make the mistake of gritting through a hill, hoping to slow down at the top, but finding that there is another equally treacherous hill awaiting. Shalane Flanagan of Marblehead, MA, was a favorite to win, since she ran the

fastest time ever by an American woman (2:22:02) in last year's marathon. But once she hit the Newton Hills she quickly lost her position among the leading pack. Shortly after finishing and coming in ninth she simply stated, "I felt like I had lead legs."

With just a few miles to go Caroline Rotich, of Ethiopia, Mare Dibaba, of Kenya, and Buzunesh of Kenya as well broke away. It was Dibaba who kept pressing forward at the 25 mile mark and it was only Rotich who could keep up with her pace. It was a nail biting finish as it was only in the last 200 meters that Rotich was able to not only maintain her pace, but speed up amid her exhaustion. Rotich won with a time

of 2:24:55 and Dibaba was a runner up, only four seconds behind her. Even after winning Rotich admitted that "[when Dibaba surged] I thought I would finish second."

The men's race was equally exciting. Like the women, the men remained in a pack of ten or so with no decisive leader. From mile 14 to 16 Dathan Ritzenhein led the pack and remained strong until the Newton hills (mile 16 to 21). He tried to hold onto the slim lead he had but by the 17th mile he had fallen to the back of the pack. The third phase of the race, from mile 21 to the finish, is mostly flat and becomes a competition of who has enough endurance to maintain their pace, despite exhaustion.

In the 22nd mile Yemane Adhane Tsegay, of Ethiopia, broke away and only six others could keep up with him. Between the 22nd and 24th mile, however, Lelisa Desisa, of Ethiopia and winner of the 2013 Marathon, kept pushing and ultimately gained a 20 meter lead. In the last 2 miles it was only Tsegay who could lessen the lead until it was a neck and neck. Desisa was able to pull away and in 2:09:17 he won the Boston Marathon for the second time, 31 seconds ahead of Tsegay.

Although the 2015 Boston Marathon has only recently concluded, many runners have already turned their sights to next year and what is sure to be yet another spectacular race.

In Review: March Madness

By
Matthew Scarlett
Register Forum Correspondent

On March 17th 2015, a day millions of college basketball fans had eagerly been awaiting, March Madness, finally kicked off. Rindge students weren't immune to the excitement of the tournament, with senior Rachael Harkavy proclaiming, "I love it! It's so exciting to root for a random team that you don't actually care about."

The Kentucky Wildcats, led by an NCAA-record nine All-Americans, entered the tournament undefeated and were considered heavy favorites to hoist the trophy. Kentucky's talent was so impressive that it caused CRLS senior Collin Mullin to state, "Kentucky is the best team I have seen since the 2009-2010 CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) B team."

However, Wildcats' run was halted in the Final Four by a Wisconsin team, led by Wooden Award Winner, Frank Kaminsky who thoroughly dominated the vaunted Kentucky front-line. Kaminsky, however, couldn't take down a second college basketball legend, losing to Duke in the final.

Not only does the tournament have enormous entertainment value, it also has the potential to bring people together. Senior Brennan Lee attests to the fact that, "March madness is an annual phenomenon that seems to grip the population of CRLS, students and faculty alike. I think it's doing a fair job of bringing peers together and teachers closer to students."

Senior Honora Gibbons nicely summed up the experience of March Madness, stating, "It has its ups and downs, but at the end of the day: ball is life."

Love & War: Return of the Spoon Games

By
Nate Quigley
Register Forum Editor

On the evening of March 12, over 120 CRLS seniors waited with bated breath for the Facebook message that would decide their course of action for the next few weeks. Upon receiving the message, some cheered, some wept, and some simply stared at their screen. The next morning at 8:00 AM, the most hallowed of events, the Spoon Games, commenced.

Though a recent tradition at Rindge as this is only the third senior class to participate, the simple game has quickly cultivated a rabid following. For the uninitiated, the game requires participants to be holding their spoon at all times outside of school and extracurriculars, lest they dare suffer the ignominious fate of elimination by their "hunter". Furthermore, each participant is

initially assigned one target, another player whom they must track down and eliminate by way of a white plastic spoon. When a player loses, the hunter is assigned their target.

As Joe Traversy, one of this year's two game-makers along with Honora Gibbons, put it, "This game fosters a sense of community and provides an unparalleled real world education. It was not only my pleasure, but my civic responsibility

state that, "My theory is that everyone had me".

On the other side of the emotional spectrum, resides senior Conor Naughton. This prolific spoon-hunter, responsible for knocking Cheshatsang out of the competition, details the primal surge he experienced after the elimination: "I got a rush that I've never felt before. A feeling like I could stay up for days on end. And I wanted more of that feeling."

At the end of the day, though, the game is simply one of survival.

Whether you're the aggressive hunter or the evasive target, this competition requires a certain unteachable skill set and an indomitable spirit to win the \$300 promised to the lone survivor. CRLS senior Rachael Harkavy, a survivor, embodies this spirit, making sure to tell her fellow competitors, "Eventually you will all [be eliminated] and I will win."

"I got a rush that I've never felt before... And I wanted more"

to run the game."

However, it isn't all fun and games for those involved. CRLS senior, Choyang Cheshatsang, suffered an early elimination, but refuses to admit defeat, claiming the existence of a high-level conspiracy. The fallen Choy believes, "The Spoon Games are a joke... given the fact that I'm out." Choy goes on to