

THE

Smoked Signal

This is a publication that is dedicated to our greatest supporters: ASB and the Administration. Thank you for your commitment to represent the needs of every upper-middle class, white, blonde girl at Hart.



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Censored: An American dilemma

By Waseem Salahi
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Today, The Smoke Signal came out. What you don't know is that the Principal and Assistant Principals censored this issue and removed the article below because they do not think the student body is mature enough to address these issues. This article is being distributed around campus in the spirit of free speech, as well as out of a genuine concern to have the topics raised addressed by our campus communities—all of them—in an all-inclusive and welcoming dialogue:

We are guilty.

People responded in shock when the peace pole was tagged a few months ago. The mere irony of it—that a symbol of harmony was so unceremoniously desecrated—was chilling; how could someone cross that moral line and disturb a fundamental idea so critical in society?

Because peace doesn't actually exist. Some would argue that tagging is a symbol of ownership. When a group of people

feel so alienated in the school, the retaliation is almost natural. That sense of ownership is so vital to man's existence. Even the Declaration of Independence stresses the importance of man's rights to life, liberty, and property.

So what happens when a group of people are so isolated economically, socially, and politically—to the point that they feel alienated from the school itself?

Economic

Getting involved was one of the first things stressed before we started our freshman year to enjoy our high school experience. It ties us into the school, keeping us familiar with a comfortable network of friends. By simply looking at the senior budget—the cap and gown, yearbook ad, prom, senior pack, yearbook, one sport, one extra curricular activity, college applications, and the senior trip—which totals to approximately \$2910, we can see that there is huge financial pressure put on students and their families. Students who cannot afford such an exhausting budget

quickly become isolated from engaging in senior activities that are told to be essential to being a part of the senior class.

Social

We were also told to make as many friends as possible—to utilize our social nature and create a network of people. How can this occur when non-English speaking students are placed into non-English classrooms for years during high school, constantly surrounded by the same group of students every day? Even ignoring the linguistic barriers, there are so many more hurdles that continue to exist. The gap between AP classes and regular classes is ridiculously large. Students are placed in polar opposite environments, dividing the “midkid” from the “intellectually elite.”

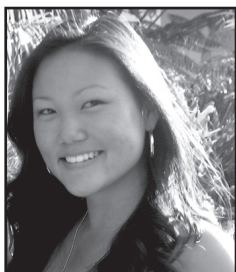
Political

Then, there's ASB. Out of the 57 students who supposedly share the same

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OpenCorner

■ What do you think of the disenfranchisement of certain groups on campus, mainly due to misrepresentation in ASB sponsored activities?



“Misrepresentation of groups in ASB-sponsored activities not only causes, but also fosters inequalities and prejudices that undeniably exist within the student body.”

-Rebekah Park, senior



“The exclusion of certain groups due to ASB activities detracts from the overall message of peace and equality that the administration is trying to send out to the public.”

-Sam Tamashiro, senior

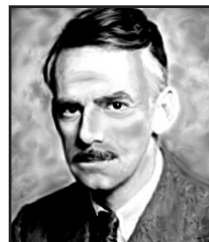
FreedomMatters

■ What justifies censorship? What should one do if freedom of speech is inhibited?



“One has not only a legal, but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.”

-Martin Luther King Jr.,
Civil Rights Activist



“Censorship of anything, at any time, in any place, on whatever pretense, has always been and always be the last resort of the boob and the bigot.”

-Eugene O’Neill, playwright

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Make sure you buy your freedom of speech this week in the ASB office

Freedom will be \$95 w/ ASB card and \$100 w/o.

Hurry because prices will go up next week!

ON SALE NOW

Oh Cry, the Censored Country

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interests as the rest of the 2,260 students that attend this school, three of them are Hispanic, three of them are Asian, and one of them is black. Thus, 5% of students are Hispanic in ASB versus the 33% in our school, 3.5% are Asian versus the 7%, and 1.7% are black versus the 2%. It can be argued that demographics are irrelevant to representation because of the various economic subgroups within those demographic groups. However, by simply looking at the bigger picture, there is such a disparity between Hispanic and Asian percentages, almost suggesting virtual disenfranchisement of those groups.

A Complex Issue

No single group can be held solely responsible for tagging. It would be ignorant and fallacious to claim or even implicate that an individual is prone to committing this crime against property by basing it solely on ethnicity or social class. However, there seems to be a recurring feeling of disassociation among those taggers—one that explains the rationale behind it. Humans are so desperate to fill that void, to feel that purpose. And it’s no wonder an individual can be pushed to that edge—willing

to cross that moral line—to feel worth in his existence.

It would also be unjustified to solely blame ASB or the administration for this isolation. They, like the administration, have made efforts to melt the student body. Mix it Up Day, for example, was one of the events sponsored by ASB to help unify the campus. However, like any group on campus, they have the burden—the duty—to continue those same efforts that have been stressed for the last few years.

However, despite these efforts, the division continues to exist. So we shouldn’t be shocked. We shouldn’t be disturbed by the irony of the *desecration of peace*—when peace, in essence, doesn’t exist. But we should be disturbed by the complexity of such an issue. To expect the issue to be solved easily and quickly would be too ideal and virtually unattainable. To fully understand the roots of the problem is also futile. However, the best we can do as individuals is by *recognizing* the problem instead of ignoring or repressing it, and instead, discuss possible solutions. It is our duty, as young, passionate students who are expected to evolve and contribute to society, to promote this open dialogue that could help mankind escape these chains that have suffocated individuals.

Questions? Comments? Praise? Hate? Criticism? Feel *free* to email me at wsalahi@gmail.com

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