THE URBAN LEGEND

The Urban School of San Francisco

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Photo illustration by Jonathan Baer

GUNS IN AMERICA: FROM SCHOOLS TO SHOOTING RANGES

by David Immerman
Staff Writer

It was cool, but I was on edge. I felt powerful, but it wasn't a good type of power. The main thought that circled my mind as I slowly became more comfortable with the Ruger Mark III Hunter Rimfire .22 caliber pistol resting in my grip at Bullseye Indoor Shooting Range & Firearms Store in San Rafael, where I stood alongside my father, my fellow editor-in-chiefs, and a safety instructor, was this: How would it feel if a bullet coming out of this gun hit me?

Obviously, it would hurt. But it took the action of actually firing a gun for me to fully understand its power.

It wasn't just the deafening booms bursting through my earplugs and earmuffs as I stood and fired at the paper target. Nor was it the flash of light radiating from the nozzle as the bullet left the chamber. It was the inexplicable thrill that surged through my body as I fired each bullet. I liked it.

see GUNS page 2

NRA prompts video game debate

by Eli Dinklespiel
Staff Writer

After more than a week of silence following the school shootings in Newtown, Conn., National Rifle Association Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre finally responded to a wave of criticism from both gun control advocates and his organization's allies. LaPierre blamed the shootings of 20 schoolchildren and six adults on "a callous, corrupt and corrupting shadow industry that sells, and sows, violence against its own people."

The industry? Violent video games.

What LaPierre did not mention is the four NRA-licensed video games that have hit shelves since 2004: "NRA High Power Competition," "Xtreme Accuracy Shooting," "NRA Varmint Hunter," and "NRA Gun Club." On Jan. 14, the one-month anniversary of the Newtown shootings, a free iPhone game titled "NRA: Shooting Range" was released on Apple's App Store. Its original rating was for kids aged four and up.

All were released with the

see NRA page 2

Students favor gun control, in and outside of school

by Aideen Murphy
Staff Writer

In the wake of the shocking shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., a *Legend* survey has found that the majority of Urban students believe that upcoming changes in gun laws will threaten Second Amendment rights — and they're perfectly fine with that.

A total of 83 students responded to the seven-question survey, which was conducted from Feb. 14 to Feb. 18, with 68 students offering comments when asked "Do you feel that your Second Amendment rights will be jeopardized if there is further gun control?"

"Although I'm generally in favor of civil liberties, I would be just as happy to scrap the Second Amendment entirely," wrote one student. "I don't see why people should just be able to purchase guns."

"The Second Amendment is flawed," wrote another student. "People should not have the unlimited right to possess any number of whichever weapons they want."

The survey also asked Urban students if purchasing handguns should be made easier, kept as is, or made harder. Out of 83 Urban students, 83.1 percent believed that buying handguns should be more difficult, while 15.7 percent believed that handgun purchasing precautions should be kept as is. One person responded that handgun purchases should be "made easier."

Another question on household gun ownership found that 91.6 percent of 83 students do not have guns within their home, yet 22.9 percent of students said that they could acquire a handgun if they wanted to from parents, gun shows, friends, or legally because they are 18 years old. One Urban student wrote that "my father has (a gun) and I have been asked by several people if I was interested in personal protection."

see SURVEY page 2

READY, AIM, FIRE *Legend* writer David Immerman experiences shooting a gun for the first time as he fires a pistol at the Bullseye Shooting Range & Firearms Store in San Rafael on Feb. 2.

photo by Jessica King Fredel

GUNS: First-time shooter takes to range

from page 1

Gun violence and control have erupted into a national debate in recent months following the December shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Conn., which left 20 children and six staff members dead.

Some argue that the United States needs tighter gun laws, while others, such as the National Rifle Association, argue that "the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is with a good guy with a gun."

Unlike most topics, this one hasn't yet triggered me to develop a strong, definitive opinion on where I stand. I see pros and cons on both sides.

So I decided to separate myself from the philosophical and intellectual aspects of this heated discussion and instead focus on the experiential part. With a topic like gun control, it was hard for me to develop any feelings towards possible solutions without actually knowing what shooting a gun feels like.

So I arranged to go to a shooting range with Jonathan Baer, editor-in-chief of news, Jessie King Fredel, editor-in-chief of visuals, and Cody Siler, editor-in-chief of layout, all accompanied by my dad. We needed state identification and, being minors, notes from our respective parents giving us permission to use the range.

We went twice, the first time being rejected because of a waiting list extending beyond the time available before the range closed, and the second time getting on the range after a 2 ½-hour wait.

"It was strange to be in a place that sells things that you associate with being illegal," said King Fredel.

Siler added, "The shooting was exhilarating. The place was weird."

The "Four Commandments of Firearm Safety," which the range instructor presented to me during the safety demonstration, were as follows:

1. Treat all firearms as though they are always loaded.
2. Never allow the muzzle to point at anything you are not willing to destroy.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger and out of the trigger guard until your sights are on target and you are ready to fire.
4. Be sure you have an acceptable target, know its surroundings, and what is beyond.

It was commandment number two that reminded me of something important: The sole purpose of a gun is to "destroy" a target. That is why guns are made. Regardless of the purpose the individual has in mind when he fires a weapon, guns destroy things. Even if the gun is shot in a range, it does not change the nature of firearms. They destroy paper, they destroy targets, and they destroy people.

It's hard for me to endorse something on any level, whether it is a pistol, a hunting rifle, or an assault rifle such as the AR-15 used to murder 26 school children and staff, with a goal completely oriented around destruction.

Over the past three years, I've written dozens of stories for the *Legend*, including editorials in which I've taken on tough issues such as race, prisons and religion.

Difficult as these issues have been to reason about, I've always reached a conclusion. But this time, there isn't one. I don't have an answer.

NRA: Diving into game industry

from page 1

the full endorsement of the NRA, with "Xtreme Accuracy Shooting" offering a $10 discount on NRA memberships.

The iPhone game, created by MEDL Mobile Inc., features a virtual shooting range, as does "Xtreme" and "High Power," as well as an outside shooting range and a simulated skeet-shoot. The guns available include an AK-47, as well as other high-powered guns like the ones used in Newtown and similar shootings.

The official app description reads that the game "offers a 3-D shooting game that instills safe and responsible ownership through fun challenges and realistic simulations … (the game allows) you to enjoy the most authentic experience possible."

According to LaPierre, "vicious, violent video games with names like "Bulletstorm," "Grand Theft Auto," "Mortal Kombat" and "Splatterhouse," along with violent movies, are a large part of why mass shootings are on the rise.

The NRA games, which have received disparaging reviews from video game critics, simulate the experience of shooting a real gun, which mainstream video games do not. By contrast, mainstream games that feature shooting are simplified by the game designers to make the games more accessible and fun. In popular "shooters," guns do not jam, firing from the hip is an effective strategy, and healing from gunshot wounds requires only ducking behind cover for a few seconds.

The difference between realistic and unrealistic shooting games raises a question: Which encourages more violence? An unrealistic game in which the player shoots aliens with lasers or a game where the player hunts with a super-realistic gun? Does beating the Joker's goons senseless in "Batman: Arkham Asylum" champion aggression more than a game in which a gamer can learn how guns work and shoot an animal in a way that is as realistic as possible?

Even longtime industry watchers have trouble answering such questions.

"Ask any of us in the games industry, and we'll champion it as a creative medium capable of great storytelling and personal expression. But it's also capable of reflecting broad societal trends — including society's ills, brashness, and inconsistencies," said Francisca Reyes, editor-in-chief of Official Xbox Magazine, in an interview with popular gaming site IGN.com.

—For more information on the video game issue, see Cracked.com writer Chris Rio, and writer Casey Lynch on IGN.com.

SHOOTS AND SCORES *Legend* staff writer Eli Dinkelspiel plays iPhone game "NRA: Shooting Range" using a shotgun to shoot skeet out of the air. Video games have been targets of criticism for their potential encouragement of violence and romanticization of guns.

photo by Jessica King Fredel

SURVEY: Student safety a longtime topic for committee

from page 1

Given greater concerns about student safety after the Newtown school shootings, the survey also asked Urban students how they feel about their safety while in the school building and on Haight Street. While only 59 percent of students felt "somewhat" physically safe on Haight Street, 88 percent answered "yes" when asked if they felt safe while in the school building. Asked if they felt "physically safe from threats within the Urban community," 80.7 percent answered "yes."

"The Second Amendment is flawed."

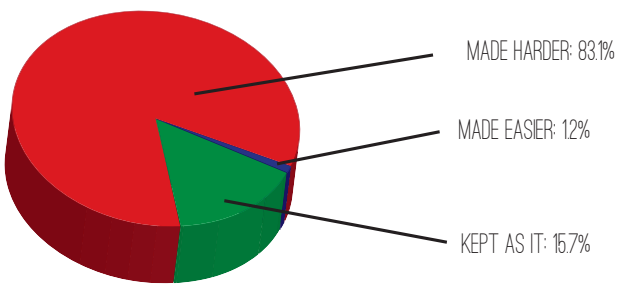
School safety was a standard topic of discussion at Urban long before the Sandy Hook shootings. Urban has a safety committee, which is composed of administrators and faculty. Prior to Sandy Hook, Urban had been working with a consultant from the fire department to evaluate safety procedures.

Charlotte Worsley, dean of student life, and co-chair of the safety committee, disagrees with the National Rifle Association's proposal of requiring schools to hire armed guards.

"I don't think it protects anybody," she said. "It escalates the violence; it challenges somebody to beat the armed guards."

Although Urban will not be hiring any armed guards, it has recently employed security guard Quincy Sampson to monitor the school in the afternoons. Sampson was not hired in response to the Sandy Hook shootings, Worsley said, but "because Urban students love Urban so much that they don't want to come home. We felt the front desk needed more support."

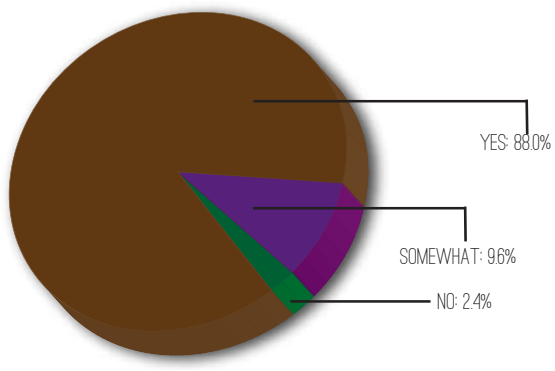
Purchasing handguns should be...



An editorial note: While the *Legend* often surveys student opinion, for this issue we reached out to math teacher Riley Maddox for help in crafting a survey that would improve our random selection techniques and our response rates, and reduce the possibility of bias, such as voluntary response bias, in which the only people who respond to a survey are those interested in the subject. Thanks to Maddox, we hope that *Legend* surveys will be a better representation of school public opinion.

We also want to express our appreciation to the 83 of the 100 randomly selected students who responded to this School Safety and Gun Policy survey. Thanks to you, our survey had a response rate of 83 percent.

Do students feel physically safe from outside threats while in the school building at Urban?

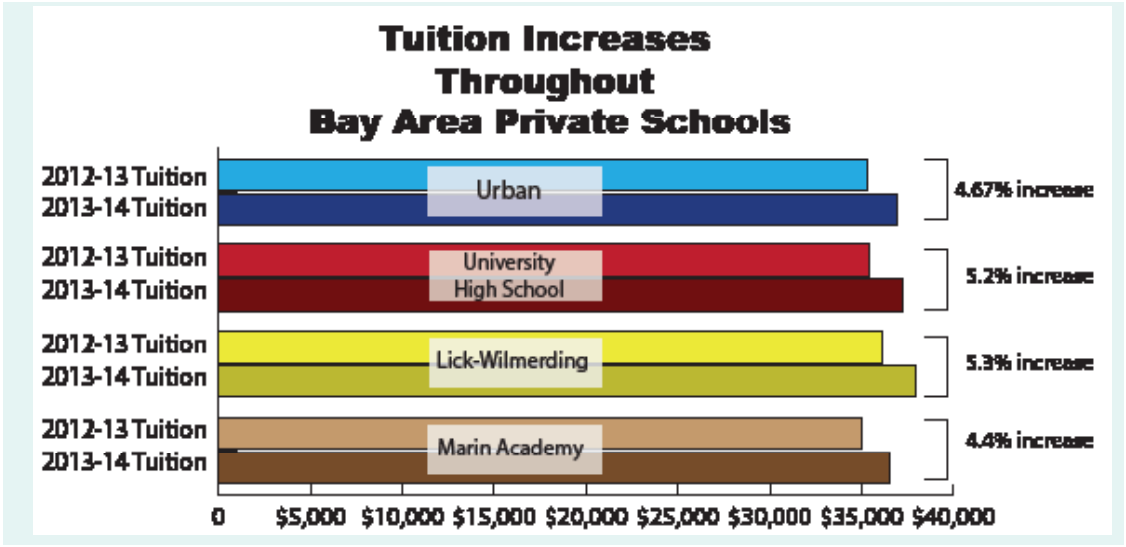


Source: Urban Legend survey. Infographic design by Jonathan Baer.

Maintaining aid, teacher salaries behind tuition increase

by Jonathan Baer

Staff Writer



Source for infographics above and below: The Urban School of San Francisco. Infographic design by Jonathan Baer.

In a move spurred by increasing teacher salaries and student aid, beginning in August the school's annual tuition will increase from $35,320 to $36,970 for the 2013-14 school year, a 4.67 percent jump.

"This tuition level will enable Urban to maintain the outstanding education and co-curricular programs we offer our students, and our commitment to a strong financial aid program," wrote Head of School Mark Salkind and Chair of the Board of Trustees Peter Ross in a Jan. 24 letter addressed to the parents, faculty, and staff.

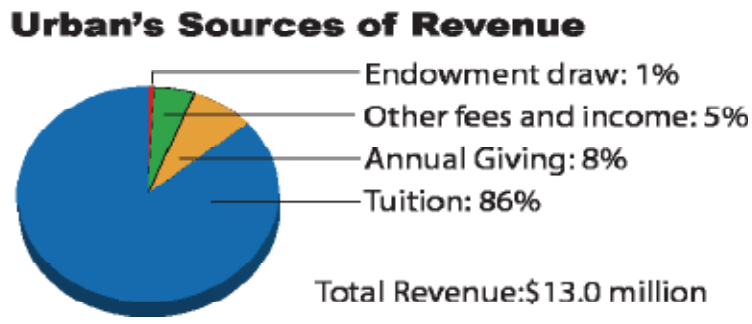
Over the last five years, Urban's average tuition has increased by 4.2 percent per year, making this year's tuition increase slightly above average compared with recent years. Over the last 20 years, the average annual tuition increase has been 5.8 percent, according to Susan Munn, Urban's director of finance and operations.

Even with an increase that could cost Urban families up to $1,650 annually, there has been minimal student reaction to the tuition increase.

"I think a fairly large portion of the students either don't know about (the tuition increase), or don't care that much," said Abby Schantz ('14), who is the student representative on the Board of Trustees and has had an active voice in Urban's budgetary process.

According to a *Legend* survey taken by 139 Urban students on Feb. 10, 4.3 percent think the increase is positive, 60.6 percent think it is negative, 15.3 percent are neutral about it, and 20.9 percent are undecided.

Tuition increases have been a trend among Bay Area private schools. San Francisco University High School's tuition will increase next year from $35,440 to $37,250, rising by 5.2 percent; Marin Academy's tuition will increase from $36,080 to $38,000, growing by 5.3 percent; and Lick-Wilmerding High School's tuition will increase from $34,996 to $36,539, rising 4.4 percent, according to the schools' respective websites.



As a result of a budget heavily reliant on tuition, expanding salaries and expenses have gone hand-in-hand with tuition increases. For the 2012-13 school year, Urban's operating budget stands at $12.4 million. According to Munn, up to 87 percent of the school's revenue comes from tuition, and the rest comes from contributions, the annual Urban auction, and the endowment.

Even though Urban's budget changes marginally every year, the general model has stayed the same: Approximately two-thirds of the budget goes towards teacher and staff salaries and benefits; 10 percent is distributed to extracurricular activities, such as the athletic department, outdoor education, and theater program; 10 percent is allocated to administrative expenses, which include insurance, memberships, and school supplies; and another 10 percent goes towards utilities, maintenance, and repairs. In addition, Urban has a $7.5 million mortgage, with payments totaling $500,000 a year.

"The model hasn't changed much," said Munn, who has worked at Urban for 22 years, but will be stepping down in June. "(The tuition revenue) has always been 85 percent — sometimes it's actually been 90 percent — of the income, and salaries have made up about two-thirds of the expenses."

Even though the structure of the budget has remained constant, the size has grown drastically: For the 1986-87 school year, the budget was $1.3 million, compared to a budget of $12.4 million for the 2012-13 school year. When adjusted for inflation, $1.3 million in 1986 translates to $2.7 million today, according to a *Legend* calculation based on the Consumer Price Index.

Urban's student body also has grown. For the 2003-04 academic year, Urban had 262 students enrolled, compared to this year's enrollment of 377 students, according to Urban's registrar. And tuition has increased: For instance, in 1986, Urban's annual tuition was $6,300, compared to next year's tuition of $36,970.

Urban's endowment also is part of the financial mix. (According to the Urban school website, Urban's endowment is "a pool of invested funds that produce a permanent flow of interest income beyond tuition revenue to support the school's operating budget."

Urban's endowment stands at $6 million. Compared with other private schools in San Francisco, Urban's endowment is relatively small. Lick-Wilmerding, for example, has an endowment of more than $45 million. Even though Lick's 2013-14 tuition of $36,539 is nearly the same as Urban's $36,970, Lick provides financial aid for 41 percent of its student body, whereas Urban provides for 29 percent of its student body, according to the schools' respective websites.

An increased focus on the endowment could allow Urban to keep its tuition increases lower in the future.

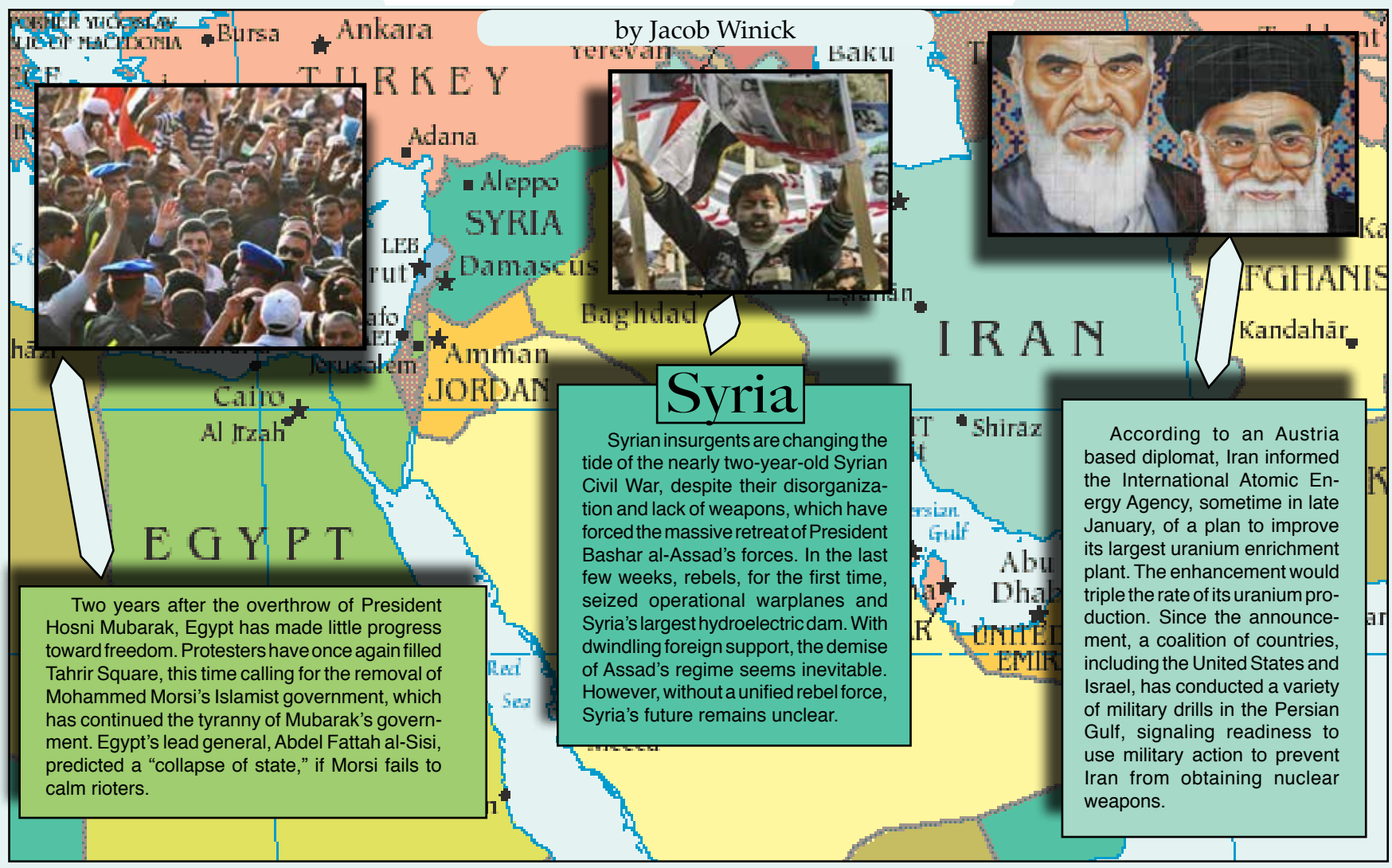
"Many more mature schools, older schools, have larger endowments, so they are less tuition-dependent," said Munn.

While tuition and budgets directly affect each student's experience at Urban, students seem to be detached from the process.

"I think that very few students know much of anything about the budgetary process," said Schantz. "Students who actively try to find our about the process are able to, but from my experience, the majority do not involve themselves with it that much."

Middle East

by Jacob Winick



Two years after the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has made little progress toward freedom. Protesters have once again filled Tahrir Square, this time calling for the removal of Mohammed Morsi's Islamist government, which has continued the tyranny of Mubarak's government. Egypt's lead general, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, predicted a "collapse of state," if Morsi fails to calm rioters.

Syria

Syrian insurgents are changing the tide of the nearly two-year-old Syrian Civil War, despite their disorganization and lack of weapons, which have forced the massive retreat of President Bashar al-Assad's forces. In the last few weeks, rebels, for the first time, seized operational warplanes and Syria's largest hydroelectric dam. With dwindling foreign support, the demise of Assad's regime seems inevitable. However, without a unified rebel force, Syria's future remains unclear.

According to an Austria based diplomat, Iran informed the International Atomic Energy Agency, sometime in late January, of a plan to improve its largest uranium enrichment plant. The enhancement would triple the rate of its uranium production. Since the announcement, a coalition of countries, including the United States and Israel, has conducted a variety of military drills in the Persian Gulf, signaling readiness to use military action to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Check out Jacob Winick's Middle East blog: "At the Crossroads" at urbanlegendnews.org

Photos from left to right: photo by Jonathan Rashad, FreedomHouse, Karl O'Brien/Creative Commons license

Illustration by Isabel Fife-Cook and Kyra Bergsund

APOCALYPSE, NOT

by Hannah Berk
Staff Writer

Board up your windows, protect your loved ones: The world is coming to an end and there is nothing that the human population can do about it. According to a list of doomsdays at Wikipedia.org, a now 16-year-old has already lived through 14 apocalypses.

The most recent apocalyptic scare — the end of the Mayan Calendar on Dec. 21 — is another addition to the archive. Two days after that prediction didn't come to pass, Warren Jeffs, leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who is serving a life sentence in a Texas prison for sexual assault of two children, wrongly predicted that the world would end on Dec. 23.

Undeterred, Jeffs later said that the world did not end due to a "lack of faith," and predicted that the world would end again on Dec. 31 (it did not).

The fear that the world is going to end is recurring and has prompted predictions for more than 2,600 years, beginning in 634 B.C.E., when the Romans believed that after 120 years their city would be destroyed.

Another huge scare was the arrival of the third millennium in 2000. According to Wikipedia.org, noted scientist Isaac Newton predicted in his book "Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel" that Jesus Christ would return to the earth in the year 2000.

The belief in the end of times is not completely out of line. It is rooted in more than 20 prominent religions; we've all heard the story of Noah's ark, right? The Hindus share the belief that the world will end in an all-destroying flood. A horrible apocalypse is also part of the Native American Hopi culture.

On a Christian website called Godward.org, writer Gary Alexander wrote that he used to believe in apocalypse rumors, but after researching the topic, he changed his views.

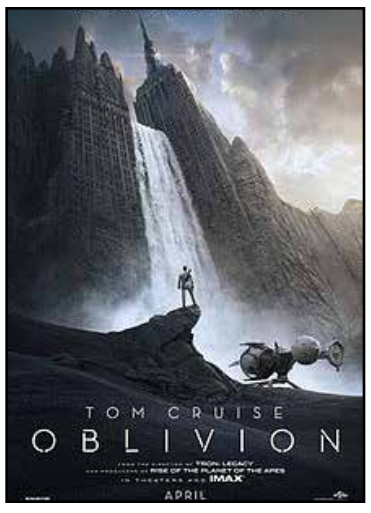
In a section called "Apocaholics Anonymous," Alexander wrote that "I still feel the urge to proclaim the end of all things, from time to time, but I white-knuckle my way to a history book for a little perspective, and then I breathe easier."

A mystery novelist, Alexander said he has been "free" of apocalypse obsessions for nearly 18 years.

Apocaholics Anonymous highlights the fact that people naturally want to believe that the world is ending, so much so that it can become an addiction.

Next up: According to astrologer Jeane Dixon, Jesus Christ will return in the year 2020.

Movies & Meteors



CRUISING SPEED In a world where Earth is nothing but a memory, Jack Harper uncovers truths that are best kept secret. Staring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman, "Oblivion" is a post-apocalyptic sci-fi movie to be released April 19.

photo from Wikimedia/Fair Use exemption

PRINCE OF DARKNESS "Star Trek Into Darkness," a new post-apocalyptic movie starring Chris Pine and Zachary Quinto, will be in theaters May 17, if the our world makes it that far.

photo from startrekmovie.com /Fair Use exemption

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE The recent meteor explosion over Russia spurred debate over a potential apocalypse.

photo from Wikimedia by Nikita Plekhanov/Fair Use exemption

Hats off to Beach Blanket Babylon

Madonna's cone bra and Dancing Poodles will never die, thanks to San Francisco's beloved, long-running comedy revue

by Marney Kline
Staff Writer

"Beach Blanket Babylon" is a theatrical tribute to what makes San Francisco truly beautiful: the absurdity, the freedom, and the flamboyance. As *New York Times* reporter Michael Janofsky proclaimed in 1998, "Beach Blanket Babylon" is no less a part of San Francisco than the Golden Gate Bridge, Coit Tower, and fog."

"Babylon" was created by Steve Silver in the city's North Beach neighborhood in 1974, and has performed to sold-out audiences for the past 39 years.

Today, ticket prices range from $25 to $130. A ticket grants the holder entry to a "zany musical spoof of pop culture with extravagant costumes and outrageously huge hats."

The hats — giant, mechanical, gravity-defying hats — are a crowd-drawing spectacle in their own right. In 1988, San Francisco's M.H.. de Young Museum held an 11-week exhibition titled, "Beach Blanket Babylon: 15 Years of Hats and Costumes." With its signature hats, the show nourishes the imagination of not just theater enthusiasts, but also those interested in engineering and aesthetic design.

As enchanting as "Babylon" is, if you're under 21, you're mostly out of luck. For people 21 and over, tickets are available every day of the week except Tuesdays. At Sunday matinees, however, "Babylon" opens its doors to those below the legal drinking age, with matinee performances at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.

As the fast-paced hilarity whizzes past, viewers sit within North Beach's Club Fugazi, where the show moved in 1976. The theater itself connects visitors with a vibrant slice of San Francisco history by giving ample reference to the show's creator, the late Steve Silver, and to the performances of bygone eras. The actual performance, in tandem with the ambience of the theater, strikes an impeccable balance between old and new.

"Babylon" is a comedy revue, meaning it provides goofy satire on a-la-mode topics through a compilation of musical numbers and short sketches. It owes its timeless nature to impeccable editorial instincts: Monica Lewinsky and the Spice Girls are two examples of American media stars once parodied but now phased out of the script.

The show has kept what works (the gigantic San Francisco skyline hat, the Beatles), but never stops discarding and renewing what is timely.

The 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, Jan. 20, for instance, ended with a spirited reference to the San Francisco 49ers victory in the NFC championship game, which occurred at the same time as the performance.

According to cast member Rena Wilson, the stage crew affixed the 49ers banner to the San Francisco hat and inserted the celebratory line into the script "backstage, while we performed."

The show lives up to two artistic maxims. One, timing is everything in theater. And two, as expressed by Leonardo da Vinci, "Art is never finished, only abandoned." With a last-minute shout-out to the San Francisco 49ers, "Babylon" demonstrates a penchant for staying on top of the times without a moment's hesitance, leaving no time to even consider abandoning its artwork.

In 2013, "Babylon" tickles many a rib by taking the audience on an

see BABYLON page 11

EVERYTHING AND THE KITCHEN SINK The 1978 Beach Blanket Babylon houses a wild collection of hats.

photo courtesy of Beach Blanket Babylon/used with permission

Josey Baker lives up to his name

by Tessa Petrich
Staff Writer

Seed feast, dark mountain rye, country, corn kamut, walnut, black pepper Parmesan, whole wheat, apricot sage — whatever sparks Josey Baker's interest, he makes.

His bread creations are now available at his bakery, The Mill, which just opened on Feb. 13. The Mill is located at 736 Divisadero St., between Grove and Fulton streets, just a short 10-minute walk from Urban.

"I love slashing the bread dough right before I load it into the oven, and then watching it transform from a little lump of dough into a delicious loaf of bread," says Baker, an amiable 30-year-old San Francisco-based bread baker.

Despite his name, Baker never planned on becoming a baker. He was working at the Lawrence Hall of Science at UC Berkeley, designing activities to teach kids science while also writing children's books. Then he changed his course to focus on what he loved to do: Bake bread.

For the past two years his business has been reliant on the ovens in San Francisco restaurants Nopa and Mission Pie. Customers could pick up Baker's bread in the Mission or sign up for deliveries, which Baker would make by bike every week.

Josey-supporters could also purchase his bread through Good Eggs, an online marketplace emphasizing the importance of local food.

Now that Baker's first bakery, The Mill, is open, his bread is likely to become more accessible and more well-known in the city.

"More and more people are trying the bread all the time, and I am really excited to bring the bread to more people with The Mill," Baker says. "We will be baking bread every day, as well as a bunch of other goodies like cookies, brownies, coffee cake, etc. (It) should be a blast."

Baker will not let the charm of his bread be lost in the expansion of his business, though. "I am really interested in keeping the business small and manageable, and baking the best stuff we can," he says.

The small-scale management of his bread pays off: Buyers love it.

"Josey is a baking god!" says Gabe Kaufman ('13). "I've only tried his bread once," but "it was love at first bite," Kaufman said.

Hearing Baker's story only made the bread taste better for Kaufman. Whole, comforting loaves of bread are Baker's specialty, perfect for toast or sandwiches.

"I think it is really great that (Baker) could pursue his passions and start a successful business," said Sarah Clowes, Urban science teacher and the faculty adviser for Green Team, which has been in close contact with Baker because of their mutual connection to Good Eggs. Good Eggs delivers a portion of Baker's bread to pick-up spots around the city, including Urban, thanks to Green Team.

"I'm impressed by his commitment to following his dreams," Clowes said.

Baker is one of an increasing number of artisan breadmakers in San Francisco, a city known for great bread.

It all started in 1849 when Boudin Bakery first opened. Since then, San Francisco has continued to exemplify its reputation for superior bread.

Take Tartine, a San Francisco-based bakery that is famous for its exceptional bread. In 2010, "Tartine Bread" was published, and became one of the top bread baking books in the country, according to amazon.com.

But even in San Francisco, Baker's business won't be protected from the pitfalls of small businesses. In the U.S., small businesses only have a 35 percent success rate after 10 years of business.

Baker has to make enough dough to keep the bread dough rising. Supporting his local business is the best way to make sure The Mill is a success. Buying local is also super-important for the local economy and is more environmentally friendly than buying from big box stores.

"I love supporting folks from (San Francisco) and surrounding areas," he says, "Just the other day I bought a bunch of walnuts from one of my customers' brothers, who has a walnut farm in Modesto."

Baker hopes to see Urban students soon. "Come say 'hey' at The Mill in February!" he said.

THE BAKER BAKES Baker poses with some freshly-made bread on Thanksgiving in this photo posted on his blog, at www.joseybakerbread.com.

UP next*

3/1
North Beach
Art Crawl
6:00 p.m.
to 9:00 p.m.

3/3
free admission to
the Asian Art Museum,
the California
Academy of Sciences,
and The Oakland
Museum of California

3/5
G-Eazy
$16 (ages 6 and up)
9:00 p.m.
Slims
333 11th St.

3/6
free admission
to the
San Francisco Zoo

3/7
Passion Pit
and
Matt and Kim
$39.50 (all ages)
7:30 p.m.
Bill Graham Civic
Auditorium
99 Grove St.

3/9
free outdoor
Yoga Day
11:00 a.m.
Big Rec Field
Golden Gate Park

**during interblock break, week of March 4*

Sources: sf.funcheap.com, ticketmaster.com, slimspresents.com

BEYOND EPIC

BESIDES ARE SU

RULE CHANGE BENEFITS SMALL FLICKS

by Louise Newlin
Staff Writer

Most years, post-nomination Oscar buzz is all about "snubs," or the deserving movies and moviemakers not honored for their work with an Oscar nomination.

But while the list of nominees for the 85th Annual Academy Awards includes some omissions — most notably the director of "Zero Dark Thirty," Kathryn Bigelow, and the director of "Argo," Ben Affleck — the real surprise is not who got ignored, but who got acknowledged.

If there's a theme to this year's Best Picture nominees, it might be "variety." The Academy's new system for nominating Best Pictures has opened the door to new genres and created a more interesting race than usual.

"Beasts of the Southern Wild," Benh Zeitlin's first full-length film, earned him both a Best Picture and Best Director nod, impressive for a directorial debut. The romantic comedy "Silver Linings Playbook" is the first movie since 1981 to win a nomination in every acting category, and got the third most nominations of any movie despite its genre.

These films are notable for being smaller scale looks at our lives — accessible and simple tales that are profound in ways that epics sometimes aren't. The surprising inclusion of these two sweet and unpretentious movies defies expectations, makes predictions more difficult, and proves that the Oscars are still capable of surprise.

Only a week before the nominees were announced, the Best Picture category was generally expected to become a three-way race between "Lincoln," "Zero Dark Thirty," and "Argo." In his nominee predictions, First Showing blogger Ethan Anderton went so far as to call "Argo's" Ben Affleck and "Zero Dark Thirty's" Kathryn Bigelow "the only locks for Oscar nods."

The fact that both films were snubbed for Best Director and are competing against each other due to similar, political subject matter means a Best Picture win for either film is a long, long shot. With two of the front-runners out of the way, the Best Picture category has become anyone's game.

The overblown studio vehicle "Life of Pi" picked up 11 nominations, most technical, for its admittedly jaw-dropping 3-D special effects.

"Silver Linings Playbook's" acting sweep makes it another attractive contender. Actors adore this movie, and they make up a significant voting bloc of the Academy itself. But the superb acting in "Silver Linings Playbook" doesn't fully explain the unlikely presence of this quirky, decidedly middlebrow romantic comedy in the film industry's most prestigious award ceremony.

Though "Playbook" is a crowd-pleasing studio vehicle, it's refreshingly alive in a way most Hollywood movies aren't. According to Salon.com's Andrew O'Hehir, "it's a rom-com that succeeds in revitalizing that discredited genre where so many others have failed, injecting it with the grit and emotion of realist drama."

Though it lacks high-brow artistic flourishes, the film's leads, Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence, bring emotionally genuine performances to "Silver Linings Playbook" that allow the film to transcend its genre. As *Rolling Stone*'s Peter Travers put it, "Silver Linings Playbook" "raises the bar on romantic comedy."

"Beasts of the Southern Wild" also benefits from the emotional honesty and authenticity of its actors. The leads of "Beast," Dwight Henry and Quvenzhané Wallis, are first-time actors under the direction of a first-time filmmaker, and the results are refreshingly believable.

Like "Silver Linings Playbook," "Beasts of the Southern Wild" is an unpretentious and exuberant examination of life's joys. By framing "Beasts" with the perspective of a child, Zeitlin has created a whimsical and frank movie that *TV Guide*'s Movie Guide called "the antithesis of Hollywood's summer mind set." Zeitlin's boldness and unconventional approach to filmmaking are what earned him a Best Director nod at the expense of popular front-runners.

Both "Beasts of the Southern Wild" and "Silver Linings Playbook" were character-driven, audience-adored movies that were never expected to get major acknowledgment from the Oscars.

Their recognition shows us that the new system for selecting Best Picture Winners, which allows any film with 5 percent or more of the vote to be nominated, has shaken up the award show in a good way. By allowing movies with a small but passionate fan base to be included in the mix, the list of Best Picture nominees has gone from an exclusive club to a celebration of the diverse range of movies that can be considered good, and should be acknowledged as Oscar-worthy.

AFTE SPRI

by Louise Newlin

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March marks the w
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story of two teenaged

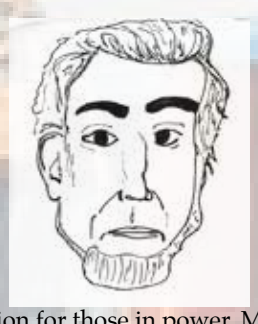
DJANGO, LINCOLN ADDRESS RACE, SLAVERY, MORALITY

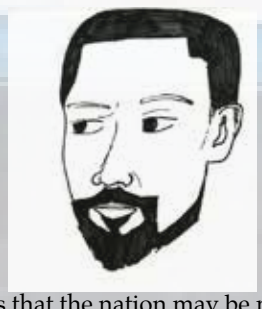
By Jessie King Fredel
Staff Writer

As the presidential election slowly fades from the country's consciousness, it is replaced by another set of elections: Qwards season. "Django Unchained" and "Lincoln" are two of the most talked-about films of the season, marking an Obama-era exploration of the politics of race and America's continued struggle with the fallout from slavery.

"Django Unchained," Quentin Tarantino's spaghetti-Western style exploration of slavery in the 1860s, follows the bounty-hunting exploits of Dr. King Schultz (Christoph Waltz) and freed slave Django (Jamie Foxx). Schultz enlists Django's help after promising to help him rescue his wife Broomhilda (Kerry Washington) from Candyland, a plantation run by Calvin Candie (the deliciously nasty Leonardo DiCaprio). The entire film, which Tarantino places in dialogue with his Nazi-hunting "Inglorious Basterds" (2009), is marked by the director's signature extreme violence.

While Lincoln (Daniel Day-Lewis, in a stunning turn) struggles with the morality of slavery in the movie of the same name, the rest of the movie turns it into a political and economic





question for those in power. Most of the film centers on old white men with strangely groomed facial hair vying for political control. African American characters seldom appear; the audience sees one house servant, (though she has a epiphanetic scene with Lincoln outside the White House one night) and two black soldiers speaking with Lincoln in the opening scene.

In contrast to "Django," which deals with slavery in its most brutal forms, Steven Spielberg's Lincoln approaches the issue from a distant place of privilege. While Django and Dr. Schultz rise up and physically attack slavery in a horrifically bloody shootout, President Lincoln approaches the issue from the abstract side of the law. While both films are personal narratives, they each highlight the effects of slavery from a unique perspective.

While Obama's election suggests that the nation may be moving into a post-racism era, vestiges of slavery continue to influence race relations in America. Dr. Stephen Jones, the keynote speaker who kicked off Urban's Month of Understanding on Jan. 18, urged students and faculty to examine both overt and covert "isms." He cited personal experiences with racism; the fact that his high school in Louisiana still hosts segregated proms drew a gasp from the students.

Race relations have seemingly become more prevalent in the conversation of film in recent years: movies like "The Help" (2011) gave us a nuanced portrait of black females but still fell prey to the "great white savior" complex. "Flight" (2012), starring Denzel Washington, touched on race but did not center on it; it simmered under the surface of his investigation but was not discussed covertly.

The continued presence of "isms"s seems to be in the forefront of Tarantino's spaghetti Western. Clarke Weatherspoon, Urban's 9th and 10th grade dean, hosted a forum to discuss Django and kick off the Month of Understanding. He said that he admired Tarantino's lack of sugarcoating and his success in "making the audience uncomfortable. You're laughing at things you shouldn't be laughing at ... The audience I saw the film with was laughing at the n-word."

Weatherspoon also hypothesized that the main character of Django was not the newly freed slave, but instead the white, German bounty hunter. Indeed, Django's motives are consistent and uncomplicated, while Schultz goes through the most noticeable character development. Tarantino's own exploration of his white privilege seems evident in his portrayal of white characters; perhaps he sees himself both in Dr. Shultz and in Candie.

As America continues to explore and reflect on our messy history of slavery and racism, the movie industry – one of our most valued forms of expression - will continue to battle with the reverberations of privilege and oppression.

S HISTORICAL BLOCKBUSTERS, 'PROFOUND BUT SIMPLE' MOVIES PRISING CONTENDERS FOR 85TH ANNUAL OSCARS

ER WINTER DOLDRUMS, NG SEASON PROMISING

Staff Writer

ary are all known e offerings ("Hansel ers," anyone?), but vill pick up in the

vide release of inde- have been circling ger and Rosa," the girls coming of age in 1962 London, "Spring Breakers," the bizarre thriller of college girls who spend their spring break working for a drugs and arms dealer (James Franco), or "Wrong," a surrealist look at a Los Angeles where there is so little crime that the police harass citizens out of boredom.

March also brings us Ryan Gosling's new movie, "The Place Beyond the Pines," in which he plays a stunt motorcycle rider who turns to robbing banks. "Pines" is the first project Gosling has done with director Derek Cianfrance since their much-acclaimed 2010 movie, "Blue Valentine."

Meanwhile, highly anticipated summer blockbusters include the sci-fi romance "Upside Down;" a female-led buddy cop comedy, "The Heat;" an emotionally wrought biopic of Jackie Robinson, "42;" the star-studded literary adaption "The Great Gatsby," and of course, "The Hangover Part III," whose producers swear it will be less formulaic than the last sequel.

Happy watching!

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
"Beasts of the Southern Wild," an imaginative saga about a bayou community, stars Quvenzhané Wallis, 10, the youngest actress ever to be nominated for an Oscar.

Background photo courtesy of Fox Searchlight

Drawings of Django and Lincoln by Tessa Petrich

Font "League Gothic" courtesy of the League of Moveable type, by Micah Rich

Spread design by Cody Siler

TAKE-HOME BALLOT

cut this out, fill out your picks and see how you do!

BEST PICTURE

☐Beasts of the Southern Wild
☐Silver Linings Playbook
☐Zero Dark Thirty
☐Lincoln
☐Les Miserables
☐Life of Pi
☐Amour
☐Django Unchained
☐Argo

BEST ACTOR

☐Bradley Cooper
☐Daniel Day-Lewis
☐Hugh Jackman
☐Joaquin Phoenix
☐Denzel Washington

BEST ACTRESS

☐Jessica Chastain
☐Jennifer Lawrence
☐Emmanuellé Riva
☐Quvenzhane Wallis
☐Naomi Watts

EDITING

☐Argo
☐Life of Pi
☐Lincoln
☐Silver Linings Playbook
☐Zero Dark Thirty

SUPPORTING ACTOR

☐Alan Arkin
☐Robert De Niro
☐Philip Seymour Hoffman
☐Tommy Lee Jones
☐Christoph Waltz

SUPPORTING ACTRESS

☐Amy Adams
☐Sally Field
☐Anne Hathaway
☐Helen Hunt
☐Jacki Weaver

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

☐Amour
☐Django Unchained
☐Flight
☐Moonrise Kingdom
☐Zero Dark Thirty

ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

☐Argo
☐Beasts of the Southern Wild
☐Life of Pi
☐Lincoln
☐Silver Linings Playbook

FOREIGN FILM

☐Amour
☐Kon-Tiki
☐No
☐A Royal Affair
☐War Witch

We the People

cannot agree on how to interpret the 2nd Amendment

In 1791, the presiding figures on Capitol Hill signed the Second Amendment into the Bill of Rights. The original statement held that, "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." In the late 18th century, Americans valued citizens' rights to organize an independent militia, just in case the federal government failed to protect their interests. Additionally, they wanted to allow citizens to participate in law enforcement and rebellion suppression. Lastly, and in perhaps the most frequently cited intention behind this amendment, Americans wanted to make it easier for the individual to protect himself in the event of assault. Although the U.S. Supreme Court re-confirmed Americans' right to bear arms without militia association in 2008, Americans continue to debate how the Second Amendment should be interpreted today, more than two centuries after its initial ratification. Here, two Urban students present opposing interpretations of the Second Amendment, and they explain how their interpretation should influence gun control laws in the United States.

PRO-Restraints on gun ownership

by Jacob Winick

Staff Writer

It was the kind of Christmas story nobody wanted to read. On Friday, Dec. 14, Adam Lanza, armed with his mother's assault rifle, killed 26 people at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

This atrocity reflects America's outdated and unjustifiable stance on gun control.

In a 2003 study, *The Journal of Trauma* found that the United States accounted for 80 percent of all firearm deaths that took place that year in 23 populous high-income countries.

Anti-gun control advocates have created a gun-loving system that allows almost anyone to buy guns without restrictions.

According to the National Institute of Justice, "no-check" sales, which do not require identification or background check, account for about 40 percent of gun sales in the U.S.

Anti-gun control advocates argue that restricting the gun trade will increase crime. "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun," goes the heavily circulated sound bite from Wayne LaPierre, the executive vice president of the National Rifle Association.

LaPierre's opinion shows a complete disregard for statistics. Guns cause far more crime than they prevent. According to *The New England Journal of Medicine*, guns are 22 times more likely to be used for suicide, seven times more likely to be used for homicide and four times more likely to cause unintentional death or injury than to be used for protection.

Gun enthusiasts have only one viable statistic to counter this evidence. Former President Bill Clinton's 10-year assault rifle ban, which passed in 1994 and expired in 2004, failed to lower homicide rates.

The ban failed because it was too weak, not because gun control is flawed. It sought to outlaw assault rifles by restricting specific features. Said M. Kristen Rand of The Violence Policy Center: "the gun industry easily found ways around the law and most of these weapons are now sold in post-ban models virtually identical to the guns Congress sought to ban in 1994."

Governments that have passed stronger gun bans, as in the United Kingdom and Australia, have seen homicide rates plummet.

Undoubtedly, inanimate guns do not perpetrate shootings — humans pull the trigger. But the instrument is a key part of the problem. It is naïve to contend otherwise.

Guns are by far the most dangerous legal weapons. Around the same time as the Newtown shootings, a man in Chenpeng, China, slashed 22 children with a knife. Anti-gun control advocates say this proves the inability of gun control to reduce crime. Indeed, the Chenpeng attack proves that a gun ban cannot suppress evil acts. But it also demonstrates how many lives such a ban can save: 28 people died in Newtown. Nobody died in Chenpeng.

Guns are:

4x

more likely to cause a unintentional injury or death than be used for protection.

To prevent these atrocities, anti-gun control advocates want to put armed guards in public schools. Let's remember that there was armed guard protecting Columbine High School. But on April 20, 1999, the officer was e ating lunch in his patrol car while 15 people died from gun wounds on campus. Conservatives continue to disguise their love of guns with a fake concern for human life. They get away with it by touting a gross misinterpretation of the Second Amendment.

Our founding fathers wrote the amendment to protect state militias, which were needed to protect states if the federal government became tyrannical. This did not protect our right to own an assault rifle.

It was not until 2008 that the conservative majority in the Supreme Court decided with a one-vote margin that the amendment applied to citizens outside of state militias. It was a ludicrous ruling fueled by gun enthusiasm rather than a diligent interpretation of the Constitution.

Since we do not have state militias, the Second Amendment is no longer applicable. We need an amendment to the constitution banning guns besides those restricted to designated marksmen or hunting areas.

Anti-gun control advocates need to return to reality. We have tried allowing guns and it has failed. Let's give peace a chance.

photo by Jessie King Fredel

ANTI-Restrictions on gun use

by Alex Johnson

Staff Writer

It's been more than 230 years since American citizens have had to defend themselves from a foreign threat.

However, the right to bear arms is still relevant. While the threat of government tyranny, violent rebellions, and redcoats is much smaller today, the ideas behind these fears still persist in today's society. Revolutionary citizens wanted a guarantee of their right to bear arms for their safety and freedom. And the ability to keep their safety in their own hands was a privilege that not many countries allowed.

When aggressors want something from defendants, they can use force or persuasion . By having a gun, defendants ensure that aggressors must use reason, not force.

This is the service firearms provide us. They act as an equalizer. Having a handgun in the purse is one of the few things that can put a 100-pound young woman on the same level as a professional criminal. By placing heavy restrictions on gun ownership, government allows the safety of its citizens to fall into the hands of felons. In June of 2007, on an NRA website, Sgt. Maj. L. Caudill wrote, "I don't carry a gun because I'm afraid, but because it enables me to be unafraid."

In 2001,

989,883

Guns were used for self defense.

Common sense says that some guns are bought for evil. Despite this, restricting the purchase of guns is not the solution. Criminals can find other ways to obtain firearms. In a 2002 study, the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* found that U.S. citizens used guns to defend themselves 989,883 times in 2001.

Placing restrictions on the acquisition of guns in hope that street violence will dwindle is ignorant. Restrictions will only prevent people who hope to use guns for defense from getting them. Criminals will get guns no matter what. According to the website JustFacts.com, England experienced 10 gun deaths per 1,000,000 citizens in the 1950s. However, after a gun control act in 1968, and a 1997 ban, homicide rates increased to 16 per 1,000,000 citizens.

Furthermore, restricting gun sales will not prevent murders. As Joyce Lee Malcolm wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* in Dec. 2012, "After a school massacre in 1998, the U.K. passed a universal ban on guns. A decade later, handgun deaths more than doubled." According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, there were approximately 242 million guns in circulation in the U.S. as of 1996. If the government limited gun sales, criminals would still illegally obtain guns and law-abiding citizens would lose the ability to protect themselves. The Clinton assault weapon ban, which passed in Sept. 1994, demonstrated this problem: The government banned assault weapon sales, yet there was no decrease in rates of violent crime.

All research aside, common sense favors guns. If someone felt threatened, he or she would want to protect himself or herself. So why wouldn't Americans want to protect the right to defend themselves?

Gun owners don't doubt the ability of law enforcement. However, police officers face limitations. According to the website gundata.org, the average response time of a 911 call is between eight and 12 minutes in most cities. In contrast, the typical length of interaction between criminal and victim is between 90 and 120 seconds. As a result, police usually arrive after the incident. Which means your immediate safety is your responsibility. Having a gun at your disposal in those critical minutes could save you from being maimed, raped, robbed or murdered.

The Second Amendment is not about duck hunting. It was written at a time where the threat of government was of legitimate concern to its citizens. While Americans are no longer at war with the British, they are still at a war with crime. Having a gun can protect law-abiding citizens from the whims of violent criminals; but if state legislatures and the federal government tighten regulations, protection from crime may not be so readily available. According to gundata.org, the average 911-response time in San Francisco is eight minutes. Bullets travel at 3,000 feet per second.

SEXISM:
ARE GIRLS MORE THAN HALF THE PROBLEM?

by Marney Kline

Staff Writer

In the film, "When Harry Met Sally," 22-year-old Sally (Meg Ryan) arrives in New York to pursue the trifecta of modern-day womanhood: career, partner, and social milieu.

Several years later, Sally sobs into her pillowcase, Harry (Billy Crystal) at her side, lamenting her ex-boyfriend's marriage to another woman. "I drove him away!" Sally wails. "And I'm going to be 40!"

"When?" Harry asks.

"Someday!" Sally howls.

Though "When Harry Met Sally" came out in 1989, Sally's whining still resonates. In fact, according to the 2011 film "Miss Representation," today's TV screens and billboards mirror her anxiety: Women are stamped with an expiration date. Or as noted feminist Gloria Steinem says, with 71% of American women on TV under 30, society "limits women's value to a baby-carrying age."

"Miss Representation" denounces a wide range of sexist media stereotypes. Statistics on eating disorders, rape, violence, and the scarcity of women in politics show America is far from gender equality.

Consumers, not government, hold the power to influence these stereotypes, and ironically, it's women who promote them most powerfully, deciding what to buy, watch, and endorse. So with every self-loathing glance in the mirror and every swipe of the credit card, women and girls themselves seem to uphold many of the cultural norms that limit them.

A recent showing of "Miss Representation" to a teen audience proved this point. In a theater on the campus of the Masters School, a K-12 school in Westchester County, N.Y., 150 students gathered. Murmurs filled the air when statistics hit the screen: 78 percent of teenage girls have eating disorders. Depression rates among teenage girls doubled between 2000 and 2010. In a lifetime, the average American woman spends up to $15,000 on cosmetics. In 2010, U.S. ad agencies spent $235.6 billion on marketing.

Still, many didn't seem to see sexism as a problem.

"Teenagers generally don't care about sexism in the media," said junior Tim Nugmanov, from Kazakhstan. "Kids our age don't take this stuff seriously," said Alex George, 17, from Atlanta.

Erin White, a junior from Charlotte, N.C., doesn't like to confront stereotypes head on. "I'm not much of a feminist," she said. "When a guy cracks a joke about me not being in the kitchen, I don't make a big deal of it because they know they shouldn't have done that."

Yet a moment later she described a classmate as "just one of those girls you can't respect. She had an eating disorder in 8th grade, she's always yearned to be in the popular crowd, and even though she's one of the prettier people I know, she has to be one of the most screwed-up and insecure."

"Women do face pressure to be something that's impossible to be," White acknowledged. "Guys can look however they want, hook up with whoever they want, but girls will be called sluts. I definitely think girls face more pressure than guys."

As "Miss Representation" shows, American culture can pigeonhole and pressure women.

For example, many are afraid to identify with "feminist," the word Steinem popularized. For some, the word conjures alarming images, like unshaven armpits and angry mobs — or one's mother refusing to make breakfast.

But what's even worse is the number of women who forgo breakfast — a statistic that is likely rising, since women fear becoming fat more than cancer, nuclear war, or losing their parents, according to a 2000 survey cited by psychologist Lisa Berzins in testimony before Congress.

Lena Dunham, writer, director, and star of the HBO show "Girls," pushes back on being thin. When the media and bloggers criticized Dunham's ample figure, Dunham replied that "I am going to show my thighs every day till I die."

Even so, too often women can be their own worst critics. the Jan. 26 episode of "Saturday Night Live," Weekend Update guest Ariana Huffington (Nasim Pedrad) joked about female support for Hillary Clinton. "Hillary is hot for the first time!" Huffington said. "She's even polling high among women. And no one hates woman more than other women. Do you know how many women other women like? Two: Oprah and who whoever Oprah likes."

"Miss Representation" warns that women are often captives of media powers they don't recognize. And therein lies a lesson: Before condemning the role that men play in gender inequality, let's recognize how much females support harmful, media-created norms. Neither jewelry nor facial creams improve our health or moral character. Neither does Hillary-bashing. Supporting women in politics does.

It all boils down to personal choice. Would you like to view yourself as a decorative object or as a competent presidential candidate who understands the nuances of the abortion debate? You may be under 18, but you can vote — with your wallet. Will you give your money to corporations that create a positive-feedback loop of female insecurity and consumerism?

Meanwhile, listen inside for the women you want to be. Urban senior Kell Fahrner-Scott is.

"I don't know how to solve the problem," she says, "except by rejecting all the nonsense that goes on around us."

LOVE-HATE FOR HILLARY

SNL actors Nasim Pedrad and Seth Meyers joke about women's once-icy, but now thawing, sentiments for former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

photo from NBC.com/ Fair Use exemption

EDITORIAL

It was a cry for help from a mother who doesn't want to be part of the next Newtown. "No one wants to send a 13-year-old to jail," wrote Liza Long, a blogger whose son is mentally ill, on anarchistsoccermom.blogspot.com. But society, "with its stigma on mental illness and its broken healthcare system, does not provide us with other options. Then another tortured soul shoots up … a kindergarten classroom. And we wring our hands and say, 'Something must be done.'"

What can we do to prevent another Newtown? Changing how we think and talk about mental illness could be a start.

First, we need to understand that mental illness does not mean violence. Violence does not mean mental illness.

True, data often show a powerful connection between the two. According to a 2012 *Mother Jones* study of the 62 most recent mass murders in America, 38 of 62 perpetrators "displayed signs of possible mental health problems."

Mental illness also is remarkably common. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that about one in four Americans suffers from "a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year" as defined by the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders." Such data can make us believe that mental illness and violence are inescapably connected.

But the truth isn't that simple.

In a Dec. 2012 editorial, the *Bangor Daily News* urged America to talk "in a way that doesn't add to the stigma already attached to people with psychological disorders — what makes someone more likely to act violently." Instead of a diagnosis, the editorial urged readers to consider factors that can result in tipping points, such as "a history of violence; substance abuse; and lack of a support system."

We repeat: Mental illness does not mean violence, nor vice versa. Nature may cause mental illness, but it's nurture — or the lack of it — that can tip us over into violence.

We must also change the language we use. "Terms like 'nutcase' … are objectionable because the intent of the speaker is to disparage the person being described," said Dr. Paul S. Applelbaum, former president of the American Psychiatric Association, told National Public Radio last March.

Fortunately, change may be ahead. Last September, the Entertainment Industries Council released a style guide for journalists who cover mental illness. It's needed: EIC President Bryan Dyak noted that "the fast pace of breaking news" can lead to "skewed views" and "discrimination."

Upgrading our conversations from "wacko" to "bipolar disorder" is not a matter of political correctness, but basic respect.

Mental illness defines a person's neurological condition, not that person. One day, Liza Long's son may need you to remember that.

This editorial represents a consensus view of the Legend staff. Comment on this story at urbanlegendnews.org/category/opinions

The Urban Legend

The Urban Legend is a vehicle for student freedom of expression and a public forum for The Urban School community. It is produced several times per year during the academic term by the journalism class. We also publish an online version of the Legend at www.urbanlegendnews.org.

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The Urban Legend won the NSPA's Pacemaker award for general excellence in newspaper in November 2012

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

by Eli Dinkelspiel
Staff Writer

One of the greatest aspects of high school sports is that every year, teams lose their best players to college, a new crop of 9th graders joins, and the torch is passed to the rising seniors.

Unlike professional teams, a championship squad is limited to only a few short years together.

So how do teams stay dominant? The best programs develop those nervous, pimply 14-year-olds into star athletes by their senior years.

Here, we look at the next four years of Urban sports: An emerging freshman star, a committed sophmore, and a junior who is set to lead his team to the championships.

Photos by Jessie King Fredel

Minna Fingerhood

Sophomore/Soccer/Center midfield/Eight years played

Skills: Often the smallest player on the field, Fingerhood prizes herself on her "ability to know where everything is on the field almost all of the time." Fingerhood, who also plays for Marin FC, is often red-faced with exertion, and works hard all game. Fingerhood, a true competitor, likes "being competitive and winning." In a school where academics and athletics compete for precious student time, it's critical to have athletes who are driven by a thirst to compete.

Background: After the diminutive Fingerhood realized that she "was too short to play basketball," she "started playing soccer ... (and) really liked it." Her favorite soccer moment was "beating one of the top teams in the state 2-0."

Fun Fact: "I hate pregnant ladies' bellybuttons."

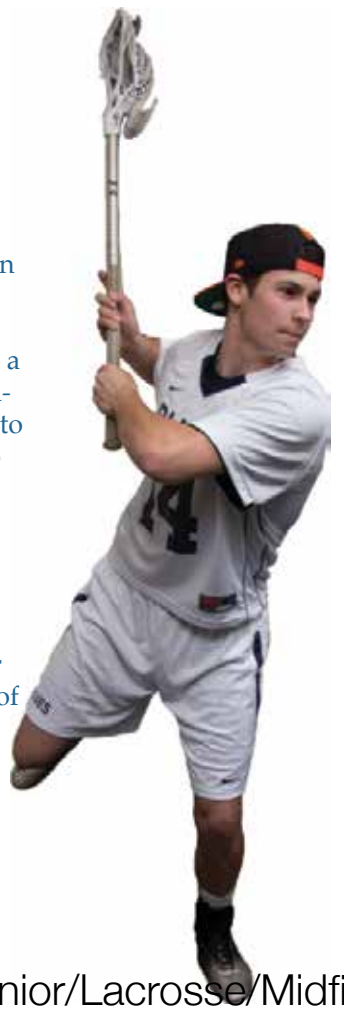
André Campbell Jr.

Freshman/Basketball/Power Forward/Seven years played

Skills: Standing over 6 feet tall, Campbell is the perfect replacement for behemoth Julian Matulich ('12), who dominated the paint for Urban before graduating. When asked what he thought his greatest on-court asset is, Campbell responded, "I'm aware of where my teammates are on the court." In such a fast-paced sport, it's an invaluable skill.

Background: "I remember my dad taking me to the (recreation) center every day after school when I was little," says the freshman. "My dad taught me the basics of basketball and I fell in love with the sport and started playing." His favorite basketball memory? "Seeing Michael Jordan's last game against the Warriors with my dad."

Fun Fact: "I can flip a quarter from my elbow into my hand."



Sigi Ocker

Junior/Lacrosse/Midfield Attack/Nine years played

Skills: Lacrosse is a very physical sport, and in that respect, Ocker is perfect. He works out at the gym "nearly every day," with massive forearms as a result. Ocker, much like the other athletes, prizes his "field awareness" and his "Lax IQ," which refers to an intimate knowledge of lacrosse that can only come from years of play. "I've been playing it since third grade, so that gives me an advantage over some opponents who have only been playing for four or five years."

Background: Although his love of the sport is apparent from just a short conversation, his entry into the sport was comparatively unambitious. "My friend Cole told me (lacrosse) was really cool and I was like, 'sure let's play.' I didn't even ask any questions about it." Now, however, Ocker plays for one of the best Bay Area lacrosse teams, The Alcatraz Outlaws. When asked why he enjoys lacrosse, Ocker replied, "Nothing clears my head like running. You never really stop running in lacrosse."

Fun Fact: "I'm a level 37 Nord in Skyrim," a popular video game that sets players loose in the fantasy world of Tamriel.

Game on!

by Alex Johnson
Staff Writer

Boys Lacrosse
Urban vs Sacred Heart
March 1, 7:15 p.m. at Kimball

In a momentous 9-8 overtime victory last season, Urban's lacrosse team defeated Sacred Heart Cathedral (historically an athletic powerhouse), in front of a horde of Urban fans under the lights of Kimball field. Urban looks to repeat its success over Sacred Heart and to build on last year's 7-7 record.

Girls Softball
Urban vs Washington
March 13, 3:30 p.m. at Rossi

Urban softball's success last season brought a lot of attention to a sport that had longed languished in the background. Despite Urban's triumph, Washington High School crushed the girls 12-1 in their Feb. 27, 2012 matchup. Promising center fielder Chantal Toupin ('15) looks to fill the hole in the lineup left by star catcher Elena Goldstein ('12) and back up ace pitcher, Rose Paratore ('14).

Check Out the Urban Legend Online

@ urban legend-news.org for coverage of recent breaking news

At the Crossroads

Photo illustration by
Eli Dinkelspiel, Tessa Petrich, and Jessie King Fredel

A new Legend blog takes on Middle East news and analysis

Staff writer Jacob Winick is behind a new Legend blog on what's happening in the Middle East, from revolutions to international crisis to diplomatic talks.

"I hope my blog sparks discussion within the Urban community over Middle Eastern news by providing a unique teenage opinion," said Winick.

Look for "At the Crossroads" under the Special Projects tab at www.urbanlegendnews.org, and email your story suggestions to Winick at jwinick@urbanschool.org.

BABYLON: 'Charming' relic proves laughter never dies

from page 5

BEACH BABE A woman displays the iconic Skyline Hat in 1978, four years after the first Beach Blanket Babylon. The North Beach-based variety show celebrates both timely and timeless entertainment.

photo by Ron Scherl, courtesy of Beach Blanket Babylon/used with permission

international journey led by Snow White, who is searching for her one true love. Snow White's plot premise has prevailed for 39 years, but never wears thin because she's constantly stumbling upon the brazen demigods of our modern-day media.

Her acquaintances include the cast of Glee, Oprah Winfrey, General David Petraeus, Blue Ivy (daughter of Beyoncé and Jay-Z), and of course, America's First Dog, Bo Obama.

Meanwhile, Bo's owner, Barack, preaches to his San Francisco-based choir with quips like, "Republicans? If I'm causing them depression, they should try Obamacare!"

Yet the coolest aspect of "Babylon" is that it never ceases to convey the intangible, yet essential, charm of San Francisco. It's a salute to creative expression that makes one proud to be from San Francisco.

In 1975, *New York Times* theater critic Richard L. Coe cited "Babylon" — back then, a wee one-year-old production — as a glittering example of West Coast theater.

"San Francisco is achieving its long-sought theatrical independence from the East," he wrote. "With Oregon's Ashland, Washington's Seattle, and Northern California's queen of cities, the Great Northwest is a lively and potentially livelier area for the performing arts. P.S.: The clean air's great."

Remarkably, Coe's words couldn't be more relevant today. Even more remarkably, the ensemble embraces the pacing of a professionally-edited YouTube video.

We live in an era of shrinking attention spans. Today, young folks must make a concentrated effort to get their news through 30-minute episodes of "The Daily Show" with Jon Stewart.

So today, in particular, it's important to engage with the relics of pasteras, especially when those relics conveniently make us forget they are relics.

"Babylon" keeps up with the fast-paced, ever-changing 24-hour news cycle that seems to bury what happens today under the avalanche of all that's going to come down tomorrow. But it also lets us remember and celebrate icons of the past.

At Club Fugazi, Madonna's cone bra and Dancing Poodles never get old. "Beach Blanket Babylon" proves that laughter never dies.

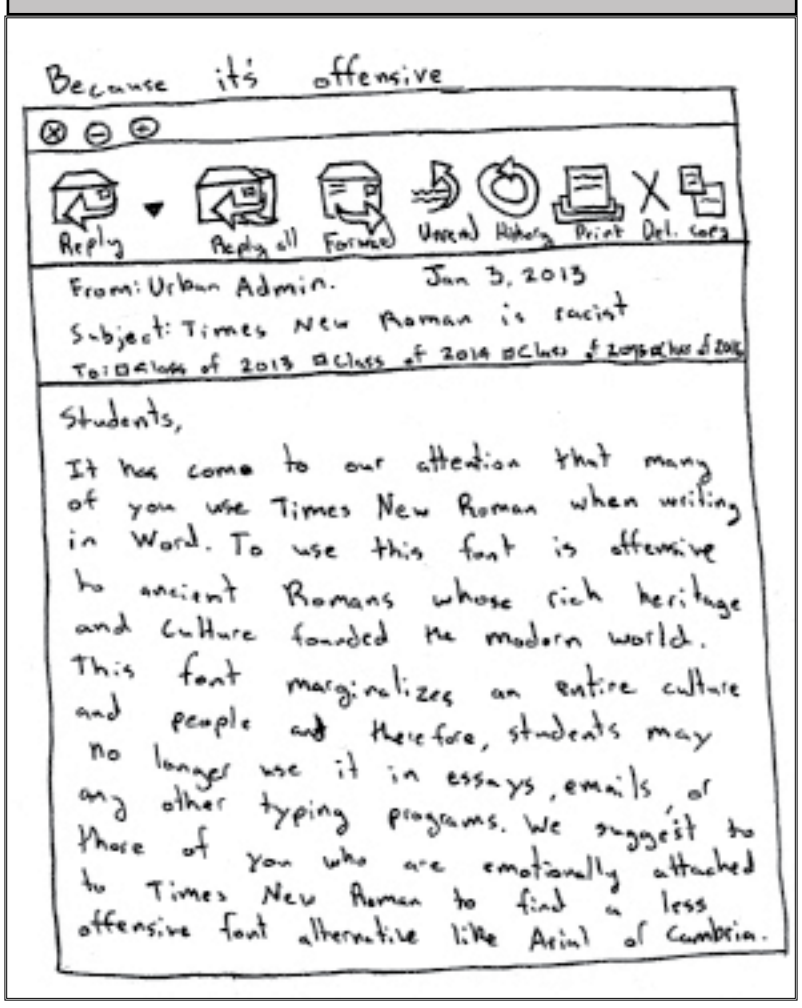
—For more information, go to www.beachblanketbabylon.com.

""San Francisco is achieving its long-sought theatrical independence from the East," wrote New York Times writer Richard L. Coe in 1975. "With Oregon's Ashland, Washington's Seattle, and Northern California's queen of cities, the Great Northwest is a lively and potentially livelier area for the performing arts. P.S. : The clean air's great."

Only at Urban would...

If you want to submit a comic for the next issue of The Urban Legend, send your submissions or questions to tpetrich@urbanschool.org.

Sharpen those color pencils: *The Urban Legend* will now host comic contests in every issue. As a staff, we will choose a winner and award a $10 Ben and Jerry's gift card. There will be a new prompt for each issue. Special thanks to Annakai Geshlider ('13) and Alexander Brewer-Fong ('14) for submitting the cartoons below in response to the prompt, "Only at Urban would (this happen)." Each will receive Ben and Jerry's gift cards. Keep an eye out for the next prompt, which we'll send to the Bulletin Board.



Comic by Alexander Brewer-Fong ('14)

Comic by Annakai Geshlider ('13)

Tune in: There's a podcast for you

by Mara Pleasure

Staff Writer

Listen up: "This American Life," "Raidolab," "The Moth," "Culture Gabfest," "Judge John Hodgman," "Selected Shorts," and "Talk of the Nation" are among the hundreds of inspiring and captivating podcasts available at the touch of an iPod.

Podcasts "are a medium that is undervalued and can have lots of great information that would otherwise be ignored," says podcast fan Canada Choate ('13).

There are many types of podcasts available: No matter what your interests are, from politics to literature to music, there is likely to be a podcast for you. And podcasts often can not only inform, but inspire.

For example, the "This American Life" podcast explores a different theme each week while bringing unique and personal stories that relate to each theme, such as the story of two girls switched at birth, or the untold stories of babysitters.

Helena Kleiner ('13), is a fan because "there are really interesting stories and a wide variety of ideas that I would never look into without this podcast."

"Radiolab" follows the same format as "This American Life," bringing a new theme each week to the podcast, but combining storytelling with science and philosophy to form one-of-a-kind podcasts and stories that one would never hear without tuning in.

Urban science teacher Geoff Ruth says that podcasts are "great to listen while I'm biking to work and building stuff in my garage."

Jacob Mooallem ('16), listens to a podcast called "Freakonomics." He describes it as "half economics and half social science" because "it is a unique look into how people's incentives impact financial decisions in ways you wouldn't imagine."

Kyle Chong, ('13), is a fan of political podcasts like "Talk of the Nation" and "The California Report," among others. Chong says listening to political podcasts allows him to keep up with the "aggressively fast-paced, 24-hour news cycle."

There are also some podcasts solely dedicated to humor, including "Judge John Hodgman," a podcast that features comedian John Hodgman ruling on everyday disputes such as whether or not chili is soup or stew or how a family dog should be treated. Hodgman treats the podcast like a real life courtroom asking for evidence from each of the defenders and inviting guest bailiffs onto the show. A common guest bailiff of his is Scott Adsit, from NBC former show "30 Rock."

Courtney Rein, an English teacher at Urban, listens to many podcasts, including one on National Public Radio called "Selected Shorts." Rein says "Selected Shorts" offers a "vivid narrative" because it features just one actor narrating a short story or other work of literature.

"For those for whom reading is a chore," the podcast is ideal, she said. "'Selected Shorts' is a way to enjoy literature" because the voice of a narrator can bring life to a story.

There are many podcasts available out there that are easily to tune into. Podcasts are great "if you have a specific area of interest that you want to know a lot about," says Chong. But he warns that with all the different options out there it important to know what you are interested in and start your podcast listening from there.

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