

the student journal of school & work



**W**elcome to the second edition of *Ampersand*—the student journal of school & work.

There comes a point in everyone's lives where they have to "grow up." This usually includes making decisions, getting a job, and finding out who we really are. It's a major adjusting point and it often happens when many people are not quite ready for it. We found that the best way to prepare for "the real world" is often not in a classroom, but from independent life experiences. High Tech High Media Arts' juniors reached these insights through internship—a time when the eleventh grade class is introduced to the real world of work.

*Ampersand* is a compilation of individual stories gained through the practices of internship. For an entire month we were no longer students in a classroom. We were students & teachers, artists & assistants, lifesavers

& caretakers, and so much more.

Through our challenges we all gained a new level of maturity, responsibility, and sense of exactly what we're capable of. Our views on the world are different and changing every day. We've created the second edition of *Ampersand* in order to show you what worlds we see now. After seeing these new worlds, our lives will never be the same.

Articles have been sorted into chapters based on what we feel is currently important in the 21st century: leadership & independence, problem solving, challenges & advice, political & current events, creativity & innovation, collaboration & communication, and happiness.

And with this, we give you the second edition of *Ampersand*—our worlds, our experiences, and our ideas, combined into one.





# Entertainment in a Recession

*The past & present*

by Sai

Sounds like an oxymoron right? I never thought the two words recession and entertainment would ever belong in the same sentence, until I completed my three-week internship at NBC 7/39 in downtown San Diego. Within the week starting internship, the first thing I noticed was that there weren't as many people as I had expected. I heard that a whole department was laid off due to the recession and the economy being in the toilet. Despite the current downsizing at NBC, all the current programming is the same consisting of daily news and entertainment. Any form of entertainment seems to find its way into our lives in some form or the other, irrespective of recession or prosperity.

While I was there at NBC, I asked some of the employees to list their utmost necessities in life; entertainment seems to rank at the bottom while a stable job, food and a place to live are always on the top, and seem to be a priority to the majority of Americans. Recession is synonymous with unemployment, home foreclosures and families tightening their budgets. Recession is here. Like every other machine, the human mind needs a break. Entertainment manifests itself in more appealing ways to suit the mind suffering from recession, may it be in the form of movies or television or music. As Lionel Richie said,

“Exactly when people are in turmoil is the time that the entertainment business has always been at its best. Because people don't want to be reminded every day that they are under siege, or that they're not having a great time of life.” It was an amazing experience to see the direct affects of the recession on one floor and the entertainment shows packaged in more attractive means on another floor of the NBC studios.

**“There is an army of people who are working behind the scenes, out of the public eye to tailor television shows to attract a bigger audience.”**

As history has shown, entertainment has been a vital source of relief for an embattled populace. Probably the most notable of such an example would be the role of entertainment during the Great Depression of the 1930's. Although it brings to mind images of impoverished and desolate

Americans queuing in bread lines or soup kitchens, entertainment was an escape for Americans surrounded by misery. Millions of Americans flocked to theaters as sound was added to movies and tuned into the radio, simply because they had nothing else that allowed them to escape from their abysmal lives. Therein is one of the unquestionable values of entertainment during economic hardship, which is that it provides the means to maintain the will of the populace to endure the suffering, brought upon them.

Many people compared the current recession with the Great Depression. No one knew how long this recession was going to last. My thoughts were swirling as I was thinking about my career after high school and college. A nice job in the news & entertainment media industry had been on top of my mind for several years. I was overjoyed when a three-week internship opportunity at NBC 7/39 came knocking on my door. As I walked proudly in the NBC studios, I had no clue why working people seemed to complain about their job. It did not take me long to realize how frustrating it was to work with limited resources and outdated computer equipment, while the demand for news & entertainment stayed high. In addition to layoffs and furloughs, executives seemed to stress on all cost cutting measures without sacrificing the quality of entertainment or viewer ratings.

There is an army of people who are working behind the scenes, out of the public eye to tailor television shows to attract more audience. Instead of spending lots of money on going to movies, people rent DVDs in the recession. If entertainment is worth their money, people continue to spend and the entertainment industry survives. Entertainment and media always have a place irrespective of the country just surviving in recession or thriving in prosperity.

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# Elementary High

*How the youngest teacher in class  
can have the best teaching advantages*

by Francisco

**M**y phone went off with an alarm so annoying that I would rather be awakened with cold water splashed on my face than listening to the same ringtone repeatedly. As I slapped the clock off, I saw what time it was. It was 7:00a.m. I sat up and stretched to get ready for my first day at internship. As I wondered why I felt so lazy getting out of bed, I had an odd emotion. I actually felt excited for work. I got ready in such a hurry, I ran out the door with a waffle in my hand and biting my jacket to hold it. I wasn't going to be late on the first day. What would they think of me, what would they say?

My internship was at Fulton Elementary where I worked as a fourth and fifth grade tutor. I liked the feeling of getting up in the morning and doing something different at school everyday. While in the process of teaching the students they gave me ideas and helped me learn about what I wanted to do in the future. By experiencing the daily

routine of work, I saw what it was like to be a teacher.

While on school campus, I saw murals and signs that somehow reminded me of my school experience. The first thing I saw was a mural of a tiger behind a cage, and I thought about what I saw. There are no cages to hold students back from accomplishing something. It relates to everyone in one way or another. As I passed through the hallways, I bumped into my mentor and her students. "Hello Mr. Francisco. We're just having milk and cookies, so grab what you need." The teacher invited me into the classroom, and I joined the class, eating their morning breakfast. During breakfast time, I talked to the students and gained background information. Some talked about video games, other talked more seriously and about what they went through at home. It sounded like I was talking to high school kids. I didn't see them as

annoying little kids but as people that go through the same things as anyone else.

Apart from their personal life, the students in classroom 13 were smart, like a garden with so many bright red roses rising out of the ground. These young students had mature attitudes as well. While watching at how the classroom ran on the first day, I had flash backs of what I learned about when I was in fourth grade along with how my peers were at the time. Since I was a tutor for them, it was easy for me to understand what they were being taught, but to help them understand it as well would be a challenge. How would I help these students learn a subject that was so obvious to me but challenging for them? The thought of this made me nervous because I would be left alone to teach them while the teacher was out of her classroom. It was like I was teaching them a different language by myself. This was what teachers go through

**“It was the first time in my life I had ever been in a classroom and students depend on my teaching.”**

everyday, and because they are very young, it made it more difficult.

It was the first time in my life I had ever been in a classroom

and had students depend on my teaching. This was my job, and I was not going to let the teacher down. I grabbed the worksheets with my nervous sweaty hands. My knees trembled when I walked, and I knew they were aware that I was also a student. I thought they wouldn't respect me if I wasn't an adult or teacher, but when I talked to them as a friend, they treated me with kindness. They wanted me to come to school with them everyday. To my surprise, I was very welcomed into their world. I found out that if you look at your job in a different way than just a routine, you can have a better time with what you do every day.

Since I got along so well with the students I worked with, I had a better time going to school than if I was a stranger. Based on my experience in classes, it's difficult to like a teacher that also gets work done. I was very lucky to get respect from these students. If I could get along with other people and easily talk to them, my day would go smoother everyday. Networking is a big part of the adult world and my job was

all about networking.

After internship I felt like I had accomplished my internship goal. I was more confident when talking. When I talked to people at a groceries store, I could talk without stuttering and actually made more eye contact when making conversation. I couldn't believe how much I enjoyed this glimpse of what my future could be as a teacher. Maybe it was because I was a young tutor and could relate to the students more, or it was because I understood them better than other adults, so they talked to me in a very friendly way. This internship experience was better than I expected it to be and I am grateful to have spent time at Fulton Elementary.





## The Search for Work

*As seen through the eyes of a teenager*

by Eleni

**T**here comes a time in many teen's lives when their parents won't pay for the things that they want. Usually this happens sometime towards the end of high school to college. It's the point that many teenagers realize that it's time to find a job. However, getting a job isn't easy, especially for high school students who have no prior work experience. This recently happened to me. This is a hard time for everyone financially because of the recession that America is going through. When I asked my parents for money to go to the movies or buy food, they began to deny my requests more and more often until finally they told me if I want money I have to earn it. So, I started the process of looking for a job. I thought getting a job would be easy. I searched the websites of at least half the stores and restaurants at the mall. Sometimes when I clicked on the tab it would perform a search for jobs and most of the time there were no jobs available in the area. Many companies have an age restriction, usually saying they don't hire younger than 18. On occasion, there would be no search or age restriction but instead I could just fill out an application either online, or by printing one out and filling it in manually. Through this process I've applied for numerous jobs, but only one business has called me back.

Filling out an application online can be a somewhat lengthy process. Businesses will often start an application asking for your personal information. It asks for a name, age, social security number, etc. Sometimes the general set of questions will be followed by a questionnaire. The questions in this area usually ask about situations that test one's judgment in the workplace. It might ask, "What would you do if a coworker was fooling around when they're supposed to be working a certain section of the store?" The question would be followed by a set of four answers to choose from: A, B, C, and D. These questions are fairly easy to answer with good judgment.

When submitting an application, one should call the company anytime from the next day to the next week to follow up with your application. This is where I went wrong. I recently learned that when filling out an

**"There comes a time in many teens' lives when their parents won't pay for the things that they want."**

**“If there is a call for a face-to-face interview, timing becomes very important.”**

application, it is important to contact the company to find out the status of your application because it shows an interest in working for that company. They would be a lot more likely to hire someone who they know is enthusiastic about working for them rather than someone who is just doing it because they can't find anything better.

Filling out an application manually is a slightly different process. When manually filling out an application, you're required to print it out from the website or to physically go into the business where you are looking for employment. The application is typically one or two pages long and is simple to fill out. That process is similar to the process for the online application. It begins with general information about the applicant. But what's more on the manual application, as well as on the online application, is a section that asks for your prior work history as well as one to three references. It is still a good idea to call in to follow up with a submitted application. It helps to reiterate an interest in the company being applied to.

If there is a call for a face-to-face interview, timing becomes very important. One needs to be sure to call them back as soon as possible. I got a call from a potential employer a recently but I was in class. I called back about two hours later but I got their voicemail. I left a message but I never heard back. I made the mistake of not calling back multiple times to seize the opportunity. Remember to be persistent. Keep returning calls until someone can be reached. It shows a strong interest in working for the company, and shows character because they will see that you can be a potentially dedicated employee.

If you're in the same position as me, you will

learn quickly that money is an essential part of life. Having a job not only helps with finances, but also looks good on college applications. Colleges will notice someone's hard work in high school, and they will translate that to a hard working college student. Being independent can give you a sense of pride and accomplishment, and make you feel all around better about yourself.

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**Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit**  
Not a work permit — Print all information except signatures

*For Minor Use*

Minor's name (last) \_\_\_\_\_ Social security number \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ Home telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School name \_\_\_\_\_

*For Employer to Complete*

Street address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ School telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Review rules for employment of minors on reverse.)





# The Pursuit of Equality

*What women go through in the workplace*

by Amber

I recently had the pleasure of interning for the producer of an Internet talk radio show. She was the most agitated and frantic, yet hardest working person I have ever met. From her example, I saw how to manage a successful media business. She showed me that in the media industry there needs to be a good person to handle all sorts of problems, or the show won't be successful. If I never had the chance to work with such a strong-minded woman, that kept her cool during tough times, I wouldn't have learned how to solve real life problems in the workplace.

Usually when people think about women in media they think about beautiful anchorwomen. Some people only look for those "eye candy" girls, the ones that wear sexy clothes and do the weather. However, we should look for the women who are involved with making the show a success.

Currently women make up only about 30 percent of the media industry. Even though this is actually high compared to other career fields (there are only 17 women senators, for example), only 12 percent of those women are in high or leadership positions in media companies. Female executives in news and other media industries are typically concentrated in communications, public relations, human resources and government relations divisions, which are not typically considered power-centers.

The way women are portrayed in the media hurts their chances of becoming leaders in that field. Even companies with women CEO's still portray women negatively. For example, Pepsi Co recently used a picture in which an actress posed with a painted-on bikini to advertise their drinks. What was most disturbing, was that they used someone from a kid's movie to pose nearly naked. Girls might see her in their favorite movies and then see her almost naked in an ad—how would that affect the way they think about the way they should dress or act? To deal with charges of sexism, Pepsi released another picture showing

**"If people view women as nothing but sexy models selling products, how will that affect how they are treated in other jobs?"**

a group of women holding Pepsi products to show that they will try to foster a workplace where everyone is treated with respect. But the real question is why would a company with a female CEO run a campaign that was demeaning women just to sell flavored water? The answer was simple: they used half-naked women just to sell more products. If people view women as nothing but sexy models selling products, how will that affect how they are treated in other jobs?

Sexism has been in existence for forever, especially during the times where women worked in the house instead of at a workplace. I recently heard from my pastor at church during a sermon that he once thought that a women's place was inside of the house cleaning, cooking, and doing things for their husbands. Although his views on this concept have changed, has it for all men? Is this what all men think—that a

woman's place is in the kitchen instead of out in the world making a living?

If all people are supposed to be treated equally, why is there still tension between men and women in and out of the workplace? So, these questions still remain. Will sexism in the workplace ever go away? Can it ever go away? Is it possible to create a completely equal environment for men and women to work together in the same workplace and where men and women are recognized for the work equally?

Would you want any of the women in your family treated this way?

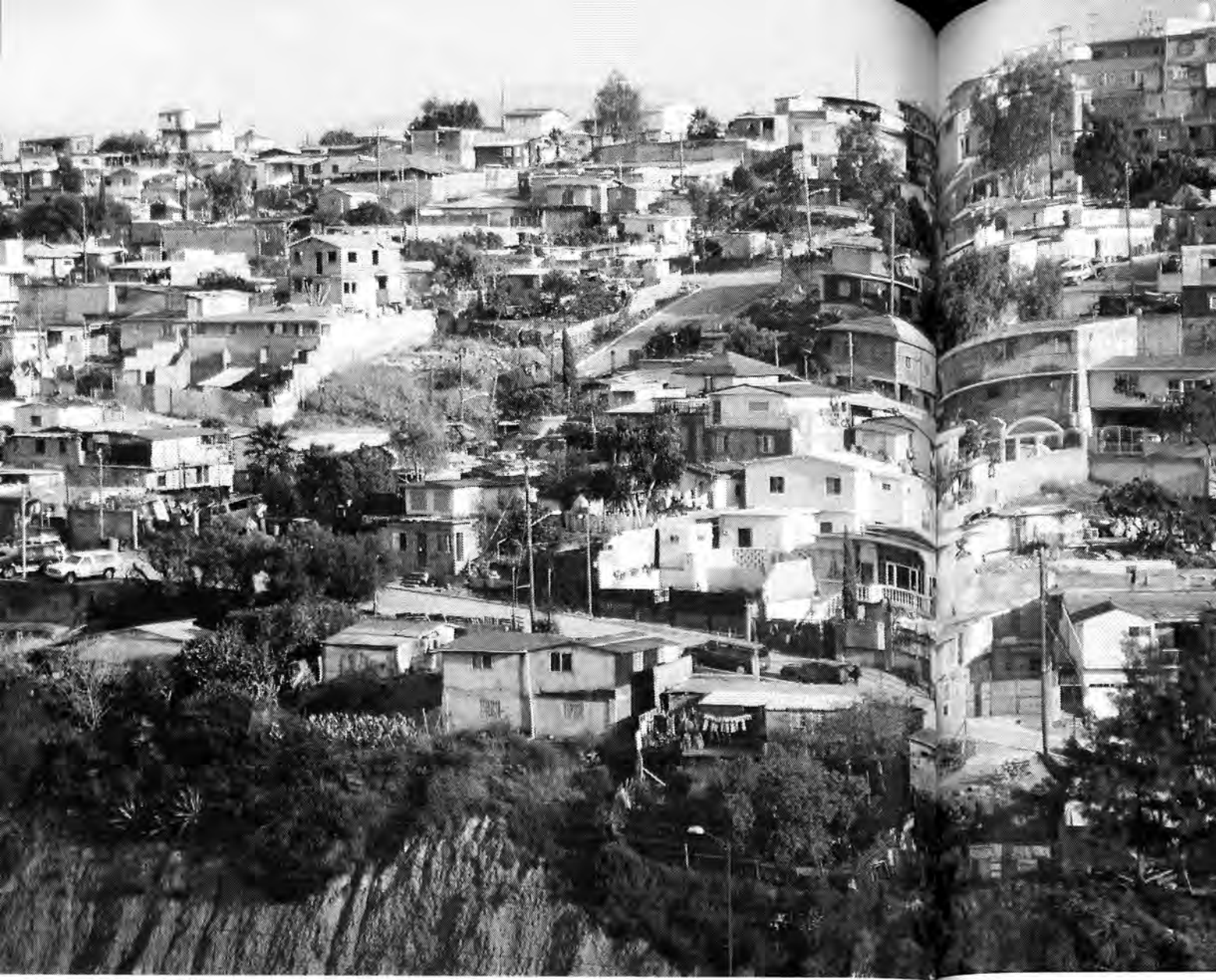
Let's put it this way: if men and women can live together, then they can work together.



the  
**Big  
Biz**  
show™

with





# Los Niños de la Calle

*Over 2,000 children are homeless today in Tijuana—and they are easy targets for organized crime.*

by Magda

**I**t has always been natural for me to feel guilty when I see kids beg for money. I was born in Tijuana and grew up around different social classes. I couldn't understand why some had money and others didn't. I learned that life is neither fair nor equal and opportunities are not available to everyone.

I visit Tijuana once a week and it's always the same. On every important street, kids from all ages juggle for change. They become adults and are independent the moment they can perform for a few coins.

When I was younger I didn't have the strength to look in into the children's eyes and tell them that we didn't have money for them. I couldn't understand why Tijuana was so different from San Diego; I never saw homeless children beg for money in San Diego. Here, in the US, we are all given the opportunity to further our education so we don't end up on the street. I felt guilty for having these opportunities they don't have. Over time, the guilt I felt for these kids, turned into the courage I need for a successful life of my own. Mexico is a developing country that has suffered from powerful nations that have taken advantage of its corrupt government, and the vulnerable are poor. Globalization and

free trade have increased the gap between rich and poor.

The North American Free Trade (NAFTA) promised to strengthen the relationship between México, Canada, and the United States by eliminating trade barriers. Eventually, this would create new employment opportunities; improve living and working conditions, and also increase protection by enforcing basic workers' rights. The agreement created the world's largest free trade area, which now links 444 million people producing \$17 trillion worth of goods and services.

However, after 16 years, we can clearly see that NAFTA's promises did not come true in Mexico. These material gains have not been

distributed evenly. For example, while the assembly plants known as the maquiladora industry created about 800,000 jobs in México between January 1994 and 2002, the agricultural sector lost 1.3 million jobs during the same period. This caused an increase in the flow of poor Mexican immigrants to the Mexican border in search of work, which in turn caused a rapid increase in the amount of homeless children in Tijuana. Over two thousand children are homeless today in Tijuana and have become easy targets for organized crime.

NAFTA represents many threats to the poor people. The elimination of the trade barriers brought cheap agricultural products from the US. This ended many Mexican crop subsidies and reduced the income and living standards of Mexican farmers who could not compete with the mechanically harvested food and artificial fertilizers used in the United States.

This is not a problem that can be fixed easily; in one way or another we are all responsible. American society uses a capitalist system which has to have poor people in order for there to be rich people. But how big does the gap need to be?

It's not easy for everyone to fully succeed in life, yet we should have equal opportunities. The children in Tijuana need to realize that earning five dollars a day from selling gum or juggling is not going to get them anywhere. My experience has inspired me to become a social worker to broaden people's perspectives on the opportunities available for them. I want to break the vicious cycle of poverty in families and I think education is the solution. I want to work with kids to improve the environment they live in and offer them the education they need to succeed.

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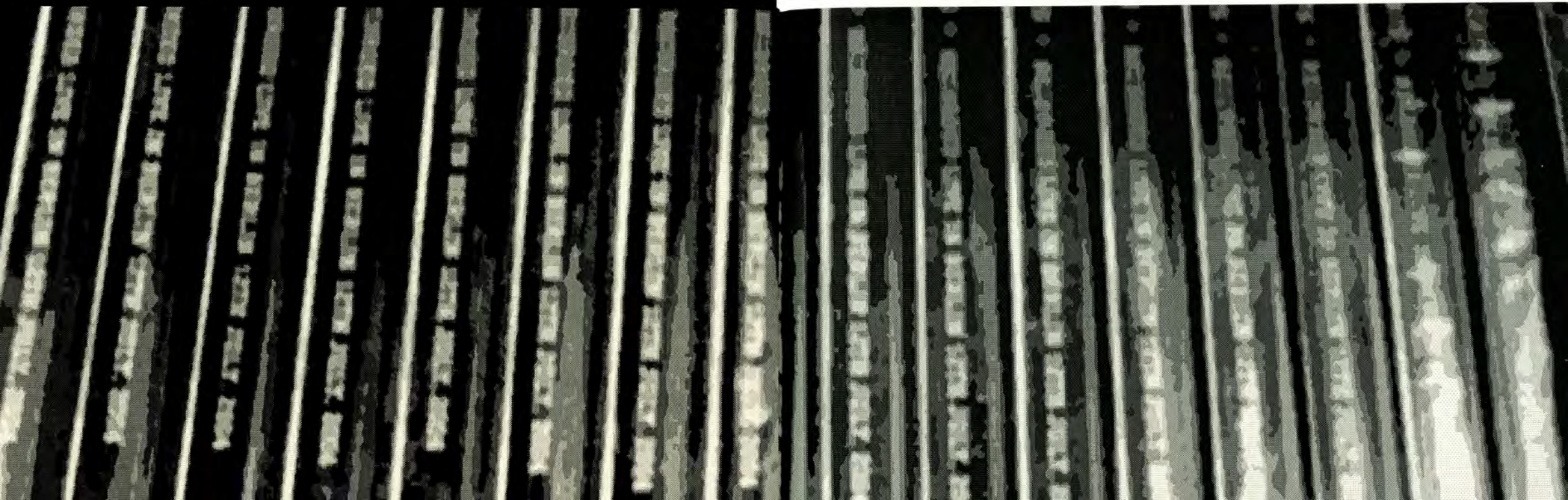
# Musical Chairs

by Dorian

*The evolution & revolution of  
music distribution*

I used them as weapons for the first seven years of my life, until I was informed of their actual purpose. It may sound naïve, but to me, a CD was nothing more than a silver reflective Frisbee of death to throw at my sisters. My only form of recorded music at the time was my Fisher-Price cassette player with a clunky Raffi tape, so when I discovered that CDs served the same purpose, I was baffled by the fact that something so thin could contain so much. As I grew older, I watched the progression of CDs, as well as the complete replacement of tapes and cassettes. After seeing this change, I knew that there would be a day in which CDs and mp3s would meet their demise, and follow in the footsteps of the cassette.

Technology is one of the few things on earth in which we witness a constant evolution. Everyone on earth is affected in one way or another by technology, whether they create it, or simply use it. One medium of technology that has significantly changed over time is the format of recorded music, with the evolution of vinyl, to the Eight-Track, to the cassette, and eventually to the CD. With each new change in the distribution of music comes a drastic shift, with stores and collectors around the world scrambling to adapt to the latest form. Although we see this change occur, we rarely ever take the time to think about the process of making the switch to a new medium and the chaos it creates. If we were to stick to one medium, music as a whole would be much more limited and we wouldn't get to watch technology play a role in its growth.





My first insight into the world of music distribution was during my time working in a CD storage room at a local record label. I found myself slaving over boxes and boxes of CDs and carrying them back and forth in order to count the inventory. As the work got more repetitive and tedious, I became more and more frustrated, and started to ponder the advantages of downloadable music. Smaller storage space options for distribution companies and consumers are among the advantages, as well as not having to ship physical products to stores around the world. The frustrations I felt have been a long running dialogue in the music scene since the beginning of its distribution.

The compact disc was first released in 1982, and after its first few years of release, it slowly chipped away at the sales of cassettes until they were ultimately superseded. In 1993 CD sales were increasing by 21%, while the sales of cassettes dropped 7%, which was a sign that cassettes had met their fate. This change meant more sales, and a whole new playing field for distribution. As businesses like Tower Records were publicly collapsing with the introduction of the mp3 and iTunes, people got a look into the future, as well as the new digital market for music. In 2008, iTunes raked in over \$3.34 billion in sales, making iTunes the number one music seller in the world, with Walmart following behind. This statistic acted as an ominous sign of rough waters ahead for CD distributors around the world. This statistic was also a wake up call to the world that downloading music was reigning supreme, but as mp3's advanced, so did CDs. In 2004, album sales dropped from 666.7 million to 618.9 million, which served as another nail in the coffin of CDs. The future held advancements to the traditional CD, like the HDCD and SACD, which are CDs with much better quality audio than the traditional CD, as well as improved versions of the mp3 like flac. Things were continually getting better, and each new landmark created a stepping-stone for an even better format to be made. It was a venture into the future of music, which one could imagine being exciting, yet nerve racking at the same time.

Now we are in a time in which technology seems to outdo itself daily. In the end, all of this chaos is conducted for one reason, the consumers. The consumers are the ones paying to keep this merry-go-round running, and they will decipher whether it crashes and burns or flourishes. If we were to stick to one medium, music recording would be much more limited in the way that we would never find better sound quality than what we have now, and we would never see new forms of distribution being released. Whether it happens tomorrow or in 25 years, I know

that my kids will experience this phenomenon, and the advancements that it brings to the industry in one way or another. The only thing I'm uncertain of is whether it will be as aerodynamic or not.

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*Students & teachers  
rally against college  
tuition increases  
& budget cuts in  
education*

by Guadalupe

They Say  
***Cut Back.***  
We Say  
***Fight Back!***



On March 4<sup>th</sup> of 2010, more than one thousand students and faculty from San Diego high schools and colleges rallied at Balboa Park, to protest against budget cuts and college tuition increase. They marched, chanted, played drums and carried banners that read “Education is a right, not a privilege” to the State Building in Downtown, San Diego. This was one out of fifteen rallies in the county that day.

In his inauguration speech, President Barack Obama mentioned education as his priority. Yet with more than a year in office, we have seen our education system deteriorate and our taxes build weapons instead of facilities for our K-12 education system. According to the New York Times, on February 2009, President Obama ordered the deployment of 17,000 additional troops to Afghanistan. On December 1, 2009, he announced another 30,000 American troops would deploy in 2010.<sup>1</sup> These actions are, as San Francisco *Chronicle* contributor and UC Berkeley professor Daniel Sargent describes, a “divestment from public education.”<sup>2</sup>

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed a 12% spending increase for higher education as one of his initial education proposals. This proposal has not been passed by the California legislature. In 2009, funding for higher education dropped by 20%. The University of California San Diego reduced their spending by \$84 million dollars last year and plan to reduce it again by \$80 million this school year. This decision has affected faculty by reducing their salaries. Many teachers and professors have been laid off and the numbers of students in intro classes have increased. By March of 2010, over 23,225 pink slips had been distributed to teachers and employees, informing them their job may not be available next year. The pink slips were sent by 464 school districts statewide.<sup>3</sup> The increase of students to teacher ratio drops the quality of students’ education. The San Francisco *Chronicle* poses an interesting question, “Will the UC system eventually become a second-rate institution?”<sup>4</sup>

In an attempt to fix their funding structure, the University of California public school system increased in and out-of-state tuition by 32%. Most students attending UCSD come from middle and working class families, and many

can’t afford to pay an increase in their tuition. Many local students have been rejected from UC schools because the school system wants out-of-state students, who will pay more for tuition. UC Berkeley is a great example; the acceptance rate for out-of-state students is 27%, compared to 14% in the year 2009. For in state students, the rate is 24.5% compared to 29.5% last year.<sup>5</sup> UC schools are supposed to be public schools, yet they have closed doors to many local students to stay afloat in this economy.

I was a part of the massive rally on March 4<sup>th</sup>. I joined 43 students from Mission Bay High school, as they walked out of their school to join college students at San Diego City College. The students were harassed for more than five miles by their school officials and police. The school officials who drove behind them stopped the students multiple times throughout their route. On the continuous stops, Ivan Picazo, the school’s officer would target students and intimidate them with comments such as, “You have no right, you guys are stupid for doing this, I will arrest you if you continue to march.” Their Principal





told the students they had no right to walk out from school and parents were told their children had been arrested.

Mission Bay students have been in an on and off fight against the JROTC program. Some of their AP classes were cut and replaced by shooting ranges. The school's M.E.Ch.A, a student organization, made constant visits to the Board of Education with clear demands on their education. They made reference to the zero-tolerance policy in schools. No weapons in schools means no weapons at all, including the weapons training program. On February 10, 2009, after three years, the Board of Education voted three to two in favor of the students from Mission Bay High School. The shooting ranges were removed and the JROTC has remained. Yet the AP classes haven't been reestablished in their curriculum.<sup>6</sup> Other High Schools like High Tech High Media Arts have never even seen military recruiters at their campus. According to Larry Rosenstock, HTH's CEO, parents from all HTH campuses receive a letter where the military asks permission to use their children's information. Parents have the choice whether or not to allow this to happen. The same letters were sent to the parents of Mission Bay High School students but the letters had already been marked as "Yes" in the checkbox, allowing military personal to use the students' information. What is the school system trying to tell us, that Hispanics and African Americans are better as soldiers than students?

Latinos, Hispanics and African-Americans have a long history of activism. They protest, rally, sit in or march to voice their opinions. They may be laughed at for stirring up hassles, but it isn't until people know their struggle and the reasons they fight for, that one starts to comprehend them. March 4 was the day to show the government the injustice it has created by failing to provide resources for students to succeed.

Their passion and rage was felt as they marched through downtown. Each and every one of them has their education at risk. We marched for our rights as students, our teachers' rights, our communities and our future generations. According to David Sanchez, the president of California Teachers Association said, "these cuts are going to hurt an entire generation of children and damage California's public education system for years to come."<sup>7</sup>

The truth is, there is money to fund higher education. Since 2001, San Diego County's accumulated share of the money spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is \$10.9 billion. That's enough to pay college tuition and fees for four years for every high school senior who has graduated in San Diego County since 2001.<sup>8</sup>





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# The Human Lab Rat



*A day in the life of a teenage research subject*

by Emilie

University of California: San Diego is one of the most well known research universities in the country, and I was lucky enough to intern there. With federal stimulus money, UCSD is working with other universities to gather children's MRI's and data to look at how the brain develops and if behavior and traits are linked to the human genome. At my internship I worked with the lead researchers to help start up the project called Pediatric Imaging, Neurocognition and Genetics (PING for short). My mentor Dr. Terry Jernigan taught me everything I know about the field of human research and what goes into a large study. However, I never expected to actually become a research subject during my internship.

Multiple aspects go into working with human subjects. Everything needs to be very thorough and the plan for the research has to be very specific. All of the paperwork was laid out with immense detail and in a step by step process. One step includes having the project you plan on working on be reviewed by an institutional review board to ensure that the project matches the universities policies and regulations. In my internship sites case, a little UCSD stamp would make or break the study.

Information on a person is a very sensitive thing in the research world, and researchers always have to make sure that the subject knows what will be done, and that they can stop being a subject at any time. PING uses children, and for each age range there was a slightly different consent form so no matter what the age of the participant was they would be able to understand the study. For the seven years olds, the consent forms read "you will be in a donut shaped machine", on the other hand, forms for 16 year olds would read "you will be in an MRI machine" It was the small differences that ensured the subject fully understood what the research entailed.

Once all of the paperwork was signed and stamped, I was officially launched into the research subject world. Before I knew it, I sat in a small, cramped blank room with a computer in front of me. I spent four hours doing tests, identifying patterns, memory skills, phonics and spelling. The computer would kindly tell me we were going to play a fun game and that I would need to put the pictures in order. Or that I would need to push the right button as fast as I could with a researcher standing by to supervise the entire time. My eyes burned from looking at a computer for so long, and I still had a slight adrenaline rush from



trying to answer the questions with speed and accuracy. After every speed test, I asked my times and made it my goal to rearrange the puzzle faster, or find the correct answer with greater speed. I wanted to be the smartest research subject yet, with perfect brains and perfect skills.

The next day at the UCSD hospital in Hillcrest, I waited to have my hour-long MRI done. The “WARNING strong magnetic field, no loose metal objects” sign sitting outside was daunting and seemed to stare right into me. Not knowing what to do, I followed some of the researchers into the control room, and, to my surprise, I saw someone laying in the MRI machine. It was a big hulking beast of a machine, and the man inside was as still as a dead man.

Before long, it was my turn to be put on the table. I was given headphones with a microphone, a squeeze ball panic button and a comfy blanket. Suddenly I was confined in the belly of the beast. Once I was pushed in, I got to watch James Bond Casino Royale, through a mirror that reflected out to a projector. I imagined an MRI as a silent procedure, but as soon as I got in, the machine startled me with beeping and loud noises just like a computer scanner. Through my internship, I had seen ruined MRI images from children who couldn't be still during the scan and I became overly conscious of any movement I made.

The loud booming scan noises; “brrrrrammmm brrrrrrr beep beep kkooonng brrrrrammmm” became rhythmic and almost comforting, I went to sleep in the machine that had been so haunting only a few moments ago. The people in the control room would check in on me periodically, which interrupted my nap. After just about the fastest hour ever, I was pulled out of the scanner and told I did a great job. I tried to sit up as soon as I could, but they told me to take it slow to make sure I didn't have a headache. Driving to my friend Hallie's house feeling pretty light headed, I felt successful as a research subject. Now I can only hope that my data and results will help researchers overturn yet another stone in the vast field of neuroscience.

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# SMS: The New World

*"My parents call my record of 15,000 text messages in the month of December a distraction, but I call it progress."*

CORY TATZ

MA . CORY

by  
Corey

In 2009, the average teenager sent 3,146 text messages each month. Before texting was created, I actually had to call my friends, talk to them face to face, and even write emails or the occasional letter. However, I have found out that texting is the new way of life, (as I write this paper I am texting one of my friends from work.) My parents call my personal record of over 15,000 text messages in the month of December a distraction, but I call it progress. 160 characters in a single message does not seem like a lot; realistically it is only two complete sentences. To share information or to keep in touch with friends or family, 160 characters is a single message, and frankly that's all I need.

My internship mentor and head varsity baseball coach Cory Tatz needed to communicate with numerous players, coaches and parents. He used email, which may seem efficient to some, but I soon realized how outdated that was. Coach Tatz would send an email and a whole week would pass by... and only three or four players would respond. During my internship, I stepped up to the plate with the homerun idea of texting. I tested the idea with a simple pre-game message similar to what once was sent over the phone or via email. The message was brief and not even a full 160 characters. It read, "Hey guys on Saturday we have a game at Canyon Crest (CCA) at 10:30. Be there at 9." Within two hours I had gotten almost every player on the team to respond.

I have noticed that teachers, my manager and business people receive a lot of emails. Most of the time they do not have time to look through every email in their inbox. A big problem with email is spam and junk mail. When you send an email it could end up as spam or junk mail. When I receive emails, I usually just delete all the spam and junk mail without looking at it. In text messaging there is no such thing as spam or junk mail. You can trust sending a text message and someone getting it within a minute.

**"The message was brief and not even a full 160 characters. Within two hours I had gotten almost every player to respond."**

Matti Makkonen created the quick, easy, and fast communication tool in 1995 and changed the way people communicate everyday. I personally know text messaging is a key to fast and quick communication. This worked while I was at internship and when I talk with my friends. My mentor was really impressed with how quick and easy communication is via text message. I told him everybody uses it, and it is likely the most reliable way to contact people.

While my parents say texting is a distraction, I have noticed the "distraction" really helped my internship and my life. Just five minutes ago, I was able to trade my shift at work and free some time for myself on Saturday.

# What Makes Us Who We Are

A photo essay  
by Ruben



## Aspirations:

What makes a human? Is it our dreams? Family? Our home? Our City? Or, is it the color in which we are judged by? It's all of the above. But this isn't just another multiple-choice test given to us in high school. This is the reality in which we live in, a world full of people

who had a dream and lost it. The few who had the strength to reach the end, came to the realization that the race they just finished was only the beginning. To get to that point in life, they had to sacrifice their families, friends, and even turn their backs on their traditions, their people and their lifestyles all for their dreams. When those people turned back to see their lives, they could only ask themselves one thing, was it worth it? Some people say to forget the past, but if we forget the past we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes. It's just another never-ending cycle. When you come to realize once you have reached your goal, there is no going back, it is a hard thing to swallow. Being from a family that once had a dream of living in the "states" to have a better life, education, and lifestyle, when we arrived here, a different perspective invaded our minds. We struggle everyday to stay alive. The question people should ask themselves before the journey should not be if you are ready, but if you are sure that you are ready for the consequences.

## Our Homes & Homeless:

Home for some is a house in a clean, gated community in a rich neighborhood. For some, it's a half built house in the middle of the projects. For others, it's just a cardboard



box under a bridge. In the heart of San Diego, lives a community of homeless people. Every night around 20 people come back to a small camp located in the outskirts of Downtown San Diego, from trying to collect as much money as they could to try and buy some food. In 2005, there were 744,000 homeless people in the US. Most homeless people are rejected for how they look. Some people may say, "Why don't they get jobs"? What some people don't realize is some of those people served in wars that this nation fought, and now they are disabled and abandoned. Homelessness is a sickness that must be cured, or it will cover everyone in its path, not caring what your race is. It cares even less what you strive for. It's just a plague that needs to be ended.



## Ethnicity:

As of 2008, 304,060,000 people lived in the United States of America, and as of July of 2007, about 79.96% of people in America were white, 12.85% black, 4.43% Asian and about 15.1% were Hispanic. This was counting many other minor ethnicities, each with a different story. A story about where they came from, who they were, and what they've left behind to come to the so-called land of freedom. Every ethnic group has their own traditions, their own food, and their own culture. Barrio Logan in San Diego is one of the most known neighborhoods for Mexican or Latino families to gather and live. Sadly, it is also known for being a troublesome neighborhood.



## Education:

Without education, you are less likely to have a well paying job. For careers such as doctors, teachers, executives, and even religious ministers, college is a must. The problem these days with college is you need to go for at least 4 years, and the recession is not helping struggling families to pay for it. With more and more jobs being cut back, people have been looking for careers that can get you out of college and working in less than a year. Places like Mesa College, Coleman College or vocational schools that can train students in less than a year to have them out working and earning an income. So what really moves our economy now? Is it jobs that require a 4-year college degree? Or it is the people who decided to go with a vocational path or associates degree to land a job quickly? And with college expenses going up, now more than ever, people are choosing the latter option.



## Economy:

What moves our economy? Large corporations? Stock markets? The home values? In past years, home values have been so unpredictable



that some people just don't know what to expect. Will people keep their homes? Foreclosure? It's anyone's guess. Many families have been kicked out of their home because they cannot afford to pay the mortgage. Things such as a variable interest rate are one of the many things that are causing foreclosures. Variable Interest Rates mean the bank has

the option of raising your interest from month to month. One month you would pay \$2,000 and the next it would increase to \$5,000, going on and on, never knowing what your payment would be. Families are struggling to keep their homes, and the income seems to only decrease with no end in sight. Many people are deciding to not pay their mortgages and just wait until the bank forces them out. Now more than ever, apartments and homes for rent have been thriving due to the amount of people who need somewhere to live. Government checks have been helping, but it is not enough. With no end in sight, many people fear the worst for them and their homes.

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