

Student Views

What are your thoughts on Kanye's recent Twitter episode?



Dave Kaler, Senior

"He has free speech so he can say whatever he likes, but I don't know why he is tweeting what he is."



Ryan Hillyer, Junior

"It's almost like a meme. With everything going on with celebrities, Twitter, and Trump, it's hard to take anything they say seriously."



Rachel Glucksman, Sophomore

"It made me like him less. They're still his opinions, so I'm not going to hate him for them, but I thought they would be different."



Jenn Kirby, Senior

"They're entertaining but they're a little annoying. I don't agree with all of them."



Ethan Olson, Junior

"It was weird because he didn't talk at all for awhile, but then he just went at people for no real reason."

The courage to care



By Arjun Thakkar

You probably know that feeling when what you're doing seems futile. When you went the extra mile in class, in a personal project, or on a run, and, in hindsight, it seemed like that extra effort just wasn't worth it. A feeling of meaninglessness.

As teenagers, we're often considered careless miscreants without any capacity to be interested in something beyond ourselves. Politicians don't think about us because they think we don't care. Many staff members don't empathize with us because they think we don't care.

In short, many adults undercut teenagers and see them as young, disillusioned fools that lack any semblance of passion.

While I think this perception doesn't fit most of us teenagers, like most stereotypes, there's a hint of truth to it. I see many students walking the halls with a frown on their face, desperate to get out of school.

In my classes, there have been so many kids that just don't engage themselves at all, doing the bare minimum to get a good grade.

I envied them.

Through my entire upbringing, I've been taught to care about what I did, that when I put effort into something, there's a direct output in some visible effect. That what I did mattered.

That might've given me a bit of an intense personality at times, as I used to prioritize my work over most things, but it was enjoyable when it felt like everything I did had some value to it.

It was by the end of my junior year where this no longer seemed true. After a school year where I

cared so much about my work, my relationships, my athletics, I felt as though all of it was for naught. That all of that effort was pointless.

Caring about work left me obsessed with doing a good job while others cruised through the year, seeming at ease. Thinking about relationships left me always wanting to be a more social person. Trying in running left me with a stress fracture and a boot for months.

During that summer, I was convinced that those who didn't care about what they did were able to enjoy life more, not concerned about anything. I tried to stop caring, but I still held onto something, and at the time, I hated that.

It was the day that our last open cross country meet got canceled that I was about to give up on myself. I found myself embarrassed in front of my teammates as I was teary-eyed and frustrated with not being able to race one last time on a course with the team.

I thought that since I cared, I was too sensitive, too weak, and those who didn't care were somehow stronger.

It was by talking with one of my best friends that I lost this foolish obsession with not caring. He helped me realize something that to this day still keeps me from being as lost as I was then.

Through talking with him, I know now that having conviction is worthwhile. To be passionate is unique. To be you, you must have the courage to care, the courage to be vulnerable, to open yourself up to emotions.

There's this thing my late great-uncle used to say in Gujarati whenever a family member was bothered: "Yeh magaj nu bhimari che." Translated, this means "That's sickness of the mind."

What he meant was that whenever your mind is set on viewing the world a certain way, all evidence around you contorts to confirm your

bias. If you think what you do is pointless, then you're prescribing that agenda to your world, and sure enough, life will have less emotion to it.

But on the same line of logic, if you believe that what you do does matter, then it will. If you care about that special person, or that project, or that competition, then it will matter to you.

How you view the world is entirely in your control.

That's why I choose to care in spite of anyone who scoffs in response. If I have to endure a situation, why not get something out of it by caring? If there's an uncontrollable factor, what I can control is how I react to it.

I wouldn't suggest caring about everything – those kids who obsess over getting a 5.33 GPA to get into college are a little overkill – but it's pivotal to selectively take interest in what goes on around you. That's what gives it meaning.

Even as a second-semester senior, when I realize it's difficult to care about your last four weeks at this dreadful institution, I've felt myself caring more – not so much about grades or AP tests – but about my interactions with friends, my favorite classes, and my connections with teachers.

Before I changed my attitude, I noticed how slowly I walked in the halls in comparison to some underclassmen who scurried to their next class.

Although I don't have the same curiosity that I did walking into New Trier freshman year, I've recently picked up my pace in the halls, eager to get to my next destination.

I firmly believe that when you're struck with doubts that doubling down on your conviction is the path to well-being.

Don't run from your convictions, even if it means getting passion sprints.

The bizarre Fortnite craze

By Eli Lieberman

You might love it, you might hate it, but you've definitely heard about it. In what has seemed like an astoundingly short period of time, Fortnite has become omnipresent on social media and in the real world.

There's plenty of mind blowing statistics surrounding the video game, such as its 45 million players and 3 million concurrent (active at one time) users. However, these numbers can't explain how bizarre the Fortnite craze has been.

As a long time Xbox owner, I've seen games extend their reach outside the console before. NBA 2K memes are an annual event, and GTA V triggered an onslaught of kids yelling "wasted" on embarrassing videos, but Fortnite is a different beast.

For one, the game has a mind blowing array of players. This reached its undeniable peak when a squad (team of four players) made up of superstar rapper Drake, rapper Travis Scott, Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Juju Smith-Schuster and professional gamer Tyler Blevins, known as Ninja, streamed Fortnite games live to millions of watchers.

This story received plenty of coverage, but it underlies an unbelievable reality. Being good at this video game makes you "cool." Cool in the sense of the people that set popular trends and have influence on society— gamers just entered that arena.

Using that same definition, Drake may literally be the coolest person on the earth. If you heard a year ago Drake was playing with a professional Halo player (Ninja's previous game of choice), most would either not care or be incredibly confused.

Halo was a popular game, but Drake and Ninja playing Halo never would have happened. But them playing Fortnite not only made sense, it seemed like an inevitable climax to Fortnite's rise.

So why is Fortnite different? It's hard to say exactly, but I have some guesses.

Rapper Vince Staples once said, "I don't play a video game unless I can kill someone or win a championship." Fortnite has both of these characteristics that draw in less traditional gamers. It's Battle Royale style challenges you to outlive your opponents to earn a "Victory Royale," a sort of championship with plenty of killing along the way.

A huge part of Fortnite's success is due to the added fun of playing with friends. The game allows you play with up to four friends, and to secure a win teams need to communicate and work together. Sometimes you have to be willing to drop chug-jug for the sake of the team, and it is these sacrifices that separate the great from the good, as well as making the replayability of the game infinite.

Epic Games updates Fortnite weekly or more, ensuring players never get bored with the playstyle. In a week, the map, weaponry, skins, or game modes can be completely different.

In addition, Fortnite's aesthetic is far different from its competition. Games such as PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds or PUBG may have beaten Fortnite to their market of Battle Royale gameplay, but the games are nothing alike visually.

Where the others have a lifelike look with gory effects, Fortnite's characters and colors could be from a Disney Movie. It is much more appealing to watch a gingerbread man character die by disappearing into a light than a lifelike character bleed out in the ground. It may pose some ethical questions, but the goofy style masks the violent premise of a Battle Royale game.

These small tweaks have taken Fortnite from a popular game to a cultural phenomenon. Streamers can make millions of dollars a year, and schools are beginning to offer scholarships to skilled players.

For years, eSports has been waiting to step outside its core supporters, and Fortnite may be the game that takes it there. Through Drake, anything is possible.

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