

# Staff Editorial

## How the iPhone generation does advisery

Since the launch of the Mobile Learning Program in the 2010-2011 school year, administrators, teachers, and students have been engaged in a continuous dialogue about the use of iPads at New Trier. There does not seem to be any widespread agreement about when, where, and how students should or should not use their iPads.

Some teachers argue that they only distract students when they are supposed to be paying attention to a lecture or working in a group. Students respond that their iPads enable them to take notes and share documents online. Students and teachers alike complain about the erratic WiFi connection, the difficulty of the Canvas app, and the limited functionality of the iPad. Upperclassmen say that we should have never forked over hundreds of dollars for iPads that have slowed noticeably and even broken down after four years. Administrators point to studies that show technology makes education more efficient and effective.

One proposal that administrators and teachers have considered but have not yet agreed upon is a no-technology policy during our daily advisery period. Those who seek to implement such a policy have many of the complaints that critics of modern technology in general have: young people spend hours a day staring at screens, young people seek desperately to always be “in the know,” young people no longer physically talk to one another. Advisery should be a time for students to unplug and relax and connect with each other, according to proponents of a no-technology period.

These are not unfounded criticisms. We all know that we spend a little too much time playing Fortnite or shopping for prom dresses or scrolling through Twitter when we should be researching American involvement in World War II or taking notes on the function of mitochondria or participating in a group discussion.

But staying plugged in should be okay in a setting like advisery. The purpose of advisery is to be an unstructured and flexible time in the morning before all of our structured and rigid schedules begin. Many of us need the 25 minutes to submit an assignment on Canvas or take one last look at a set of Quizlet flashcards before a test. Others of us need the 25 minutes to work out an after-school carpool or respond to emails. We are capable of doing all of these things while listening to morning announcements on the PA and chatting with our friends in advisery—and those of us who do not want to should not be forced to.

We acknowledge that there are times when our advisers have every right to expect that we put away our phones and tablets and laptops. Advisery works best when the use of technology is left to the discretion of the adviser who personally knows his or her group and what they do everyday.

As 14 to 18 year-olds, we should be capable of exercising the obedience and self-control needed to put away our devices when we are told to.

The way that advisery is currently run is also the most accurate way to prepare us for the way the “real world” works. In the “real world,” we will not be surrounded by authority figures who dictate when and where and how we can use our devices. We will have to be self-aware, and we will have to be able to discern the most appropriate and effective ways to use our personal technology. We ask that the adults allow us to develop those skills of self-awareness and discernment needed for the “real world” now. After all, isn’t that what high school is for?

## It’s Timujin Khan, not just Ghengis Khan



by Michelle Yurovsky

Whenever someone asks me what my nationality is, I respond by saying that my Mom is from Mongolia and my Dad is from Russia.

Most nod their heads when I say Russia, but a funky look emerges in their eyes whenever I mention Mongolia.

Most of the time people are too proud to admit that aside from Mongolian beef, they haven’t heard of the country, so I usually proceed to explain that it is located between China and Russia.

It is extremely important for people to go out of their way, no matter where they live, to learn more about the world around them.

It is pretty selfish to have the mentality that everyone knows where the United States is, yet there are still so many people who couldn’t care less about the rest of the world.

Even countries as small as Mongolia can broaden your horizon and open your eyes to a whole new world of cultures that you never even knew existed.

Mongolia is without a doubt one of the world’s hidden gems. Aside from the fact that there are more animals than people and it has beautiful landscape, it is also the birthplace of one of history’s “greatest” conquerors.

The late emperor Ghengis Khan was able to establish the greatest land empire in history. According to history.com, at the peak of their conquest, the Mongols controlled between eleven and twelve million contiguous square miles, an area which is equivalent to the size of Africa. Was he successful, yes. Humane? Far from it. He was brutal and inhumane in his conquests.

Ghengis Khan created the first international postal service, allowing people to mail parcels and letters to friends and family in other countries without having to hire specialized couriers.

I want to clear any misconceptions regarding Khan. Honestly, it’s pretty annoying having to correct the same things every time I have a conversation with someone about Mongolia. First off, it’s pronounced Chin-gis. Not Gengis, not ghingees, CHINGGIS.

Second, no matter how confusing this may seem, Ghengis is not his first name! It is simply a title! Ghengis stands for “universal ruler” in Mongolian. Khan’s first name is officially Temüjin, but once he became an emperor, he gained his official title.

When I was eight, I visited Mongolia with my parents for the first time. I happen to speak Mongolian, but I remember it being very difficult for my dad to communicate with anyone. Luckily, some people in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city, spoke Russian (my dad’s first language). Mongolia is also the only country with two humped camels, which live in the Gobi desert.

One of the most amazing

experiences of my life was when I visited the Tsaatan people, better known as the reindeer people. They live deep in a remote forest in Mongolia, and they depend on their reindeer for nearly all aspects of survival.

The Tsaatan treat their reindeer like members of their family. They are their primary source of food, milk, tools (made from their antlers) and transport. They very rarely eat reindeer meat, as they are more valuable to them alive than dead.

Who would have thought that there are people in our world who actually live with reindeers.

The main religion that is practiced in Mongolia is Buddhism, but there is a great deal of Shamanism as well. My mom is a very superstitious person. If she’s in my way and I need to step over her, she will make me step back over her. Don’t ask me why, as I literally have no idea.

Whenever my mom is going through a tough time in her life, or someone else in my family is, she contacts a shaman, which is someone that has access to and influence in the world of good and evil spirits. The shaman doesn’t even need an explanation of the situation, they somehow just know what is wrong and the steps that are needed to be taken in order for there to be a successful solution.

The world we live in is so much more than what we know. Buy a plane ticket, or even pick up a book and discover it for yourself.

## Pushing the feminist agenda on Tinder



by Mia Sherin

On my 18th birthday, I weighed the many options of rebellious acts I could finally participate in. Should I get a piercing? A tattoo? Donate my plasma? No, none of that felt right. I knew the only respectable way to spend my 18th birthday would be to finally download Tinder. But instead of actually using the account for its intended purpose, I thought it would be even more fun to use it to push my feminist agenda!

Tinder is often characterized as a hub for gross, grimy guys, not ones who are known for their respect for women. But was this a fair assumption? As the dedicated journalist that I am, I took one for the team and started messaging guy after guy, sending each the same question: “Are you a feminist?”

It started out as somewhat of a game. I made bets with myself about how many guys it would take before I found a feminist. Would it be 2? Or 30? As the number grew, these messages stopped feeding my curiosity and instead began to trigger my disappointment with our society.

Some of these guys’ responses were pretty amusing. For example, poor, confused Ashwin replied, “Yes. End women’s suffrage.”

Adam clapped back with his own question and asked me, “Do you know normal conversation?” I also received a fair share of “LMAO

no,” or just a classic disapproving emoji. Of at least 30 people I messaged, only 4 said they were feminists.

What I found most concerning was that the vast majority of responses simply said, “I’m not a feminist, but I do believe in gender equality.” I quickly realized that not only are these men, and our society, uneducated on the true meaning on feminism, but the word in itself has started to take on a completely different—and incorrect—meaning.

The dictionary definition of feminism is, “The advocacy of women’s rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.” Many people believe that feminists are pushing for women to be above men, rather than just equal.

But as the definition reads, feminism is simply the push for “equality of the sexes.” Gender equality. So, to Dylan, Aaron, Colin, Devan, and anyone else who “believes in gender equality but would not call himself a feminist,” it is time to understand that feminism and gender equality are the same thing.

Every group has its radicals. There are no doubt people who refer to themselves as feminists but are instead taking it too far, looking for women to be viewed as superior to men. But these people are not the embodiment of feminism.

Some people don’t call themselves a feminist because of the negative connotation that comes with it. That maybe it “means” the advocacy for gender equality but in reality feminists just want women to be above men.

Do not let the radicals define what it truly means to be a feminist. Let those who march for political,

economic, and social equality of the sexes define it. As Mary Wollstonecraft said, “I do not wish women to have power over men; but over themselves.”

Back to my Tinder saga. There was another category of guys who avoided answering completely. They would say things like, “I mean I ain’t sexist,” “Do you want me to be?” or even “I have a little sister, and I love her so much!”

Why is feminism treated as a dirty word? Why could none of these guys bear to call themselves a feminist, even when they alluded to agreeing with its tenets?

I believe it has something to do with the word itself. Some say that if feminism truly embodied gender equality, it wouldn’t be called being a “feminist” but rather a “peopleist” or “humanist.”

But here is where they’re wrong. When it comes to equality, women are here (picture my left hand in front of you at shoulder level), and men are here (picture my right hand reaching really high up). Now picture my left hand rising to meet my right. Satisfying, isn’t it? That is what feminism is working towards, and that’s why it is called feminism. Because in order for gender equality to exist, the rights of women need to improve. Hence the prefix “fem.”

I’m guessing that these guys did not log onto Tinder dying to learn more about feminism. But after some lengthy explaining and convincing, I am proud to say that at least a few new feminists came out of this experience. Who knew Tinder would be my next platform to educate about feminism?

Maybe next I’ll try JSwipe.

