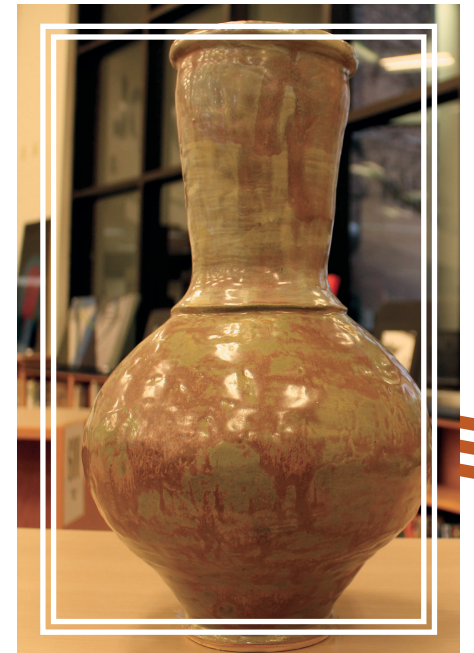


2020 Art Show

Shera Tanvir | Assistant Editor



Tik Tok Takes Over The World

Da’Naijah Holmes | Staff Writer

Vine. Musically. Tik Tok. Each of these apps have had a significant role when it comes to molding part of the artistic side of our community. Some may believe that these apps are extremely cringe worthy and pointless. Some may believe that these apps help them release their anxiety or pent up emotions. I believe that this app is a fun and creative way to do silly things with friends or share amazing advice. About a month ago, I had the exact same feelings that you probably have about Tik Tok. I believed that it had no real comedic value and served no point in our little social universe. However, after watching a few Tik Toks at an ungodly hour and making a little dance video myself. I came to the conclusion that this could be considered slightly enjoyable and even funny.

Now, unless you have been living under a rock then you should know what Tik Tok is. Tik Tok is an app that was made after Chinese technology firm, ByteDance decided to merge with Musical.ly. Both apps have been used primarily for forty second lip-sync and comedy videos. Some of the most beloved social media stars have managed to grow their following on this app including; Will Smith, Kevin Hart, Cardi B, and Britney Spears. Majority of those who use this app have even become famous due to their

dancing videos like Loren Gray, Jacob Sartorius, Charlie D’Amelio, and Kristen Hancher. Tik Tok could almost be compared to as a digital karaoke but you are allowed to add your own spin to it. For example, the song “Lottery” by K Camp has been used in multiple Tik Tok videos followed

“This app is a fun and creative way to do silly things with friends or share amazing advice.”

by a dance called the “Renegade”. This song has been paired with this dance and has slowly become one of the most popular videos to come across on Tik Tok.

Fortunately, Tik Tok is not just an app that contains memes and dancing videos! There are multiple accounts that dedicate the majority of their postings to tips, tricks, and advice. Have you

ever wanted to find a new acne remedy but could never find one on Instagram or Snapchat? Have you ever been searching for how to make your favorite ice cream but could never find the recipe online? Maybe, you are tired of sitting through twenty minute videos just to find a new makeup look? Tik Tok users have managed to share all of these things in quick one minute videos without the hassle of unnecessary introductions and irrelevant stories between each transition. This could be seen as a quick and efficient way to learn something easily if you are on a time restricted schedule.

Ultimately, Tik Tok should be seen as an app that not only contains a fun way to show off your awesome dancing skills but also contains lots of interesting and helpful advice that could help when you are in a tough situation. Now if I were you, I would go download Tik Tok and learn how to do the Renegade.

One Size Fits Small

Da’Naijah Holmes | Staff Writer

One size fits small. At least, according to the clothing brand, ‘Brandy Melville’. Brandy Melville is a clothing and fashion accessories brand that mainly focuses the design of their clothes on teenage girls and young women. This store has been a successful clothing brand since it first opened in 1994 and since then, it has become one of the most popular stores that teenagers buy clothing items from. Now, if you have never heard of Brandy Melville then that is understandable since they don’t advertise at all. The brand has managed to gain a large following by having celebrities like Kendall Jenner, Hailey Bieber, and Sofia Richie advertise their clothing. Despite all of the positive feedback that Brandy Melville may gain from their celebrity advertisers, there is one major flaw that is widely known within the brand. A large part of social media is “body positivity,” this is an aspect that has been built up and tore back down, due to either body shaming or the multiple thin models broadcasted everywhere.

The store would gain a lot more recognition if there was one little thing that was adjusted about their branding style - the sizes of their clothing. Beginning in the early 2000’s, it has been recognized that the brand only has one size for clothing - Small. Brandy Melville has a “one size fits all” claim that helps differentiate itself from other stores. Despite the fact that this claim is entirely false, the business still manages

to grow and gain profit from teenage girls every day. The store sells mainly “chic and extremely trendy items” that most teenage girls find themselves attracted to. The loosely fitted jeans, plaid skirts, halter tops and anything else that may be considered as pleasingly “aesthetic”. Considering the sizes of these items, many girls may feel like they aren’t pretty enough for these clothes or like their

“The store would gain a lot more recognition if there was one little thing that was adjusted about their branding style - the sizes of their clothing.”

size is something that they have to be ashamed of, but that shouldn’t be the case at all.

Critics claim that Brandy Melville has raised the stakes when it comes to fat-shaming. The idea of only “small” sized shirts or unnecessarily tight skinny jeans should be considered as an all time low for a fashion company. In 2012, Trisha Paytas said she’d been shamed at a Brandy Melville store. The YouTube star stated, “ I didn’t get 10 seconds into the store when I was told ‘I would not fit anything’ and that I wasn’t allowed to

try anything on because ‘I would stretch the clothes out.’ “ Paytas had released a YouTube video about the incident but ultimately had to take it down due to legal issues involving Brandy Melville. The way a person styles their outfits is supposed to make them feel more confident in themselves. Brandy Melville has made it so a girl that is unable to fit an extra small will potentially feel worse and uncomfortable in her own skin.

Some may argue that considering the Brandy Melville brand is primarily targeted towards young, teenage girls - there shouldn’t be any kind of issue. Unfortunately for them, there is a large chunk of the teenage population that are not tall and skinny. Ultimately, the style of this brand has the potential to seriously damage one’s ego and impact the way someone may view themselves.

Overall, Brandy Melville has some serious style choices to reconsider. If they were to change the way things were fitted, their business would be booming even more than it is now. The idea of redesigning would not only help their business, but it would also be beneficial to those girls who are affected by the poor body representation.

PRO vs. CON

To Thrift or Not to Thrift

Does the social epoch of “thrift” benefit or harm society at large?

CON

“The hobby of thrifting amongst financially secure people takes away affordable opportunities for those in need.”

Junna Chang | Staff Writer

Recently, there has been a rapid rise in the popularity of vintage style looks and buying upcycled items from the thrift store. The thrill of purchasing clothes at outrageously low prices has particularly appealed to young upper-middle-class consumers. Although the thrift stores are open to customers of all backgrounds, is it ethical for more-advantaged people to splurge on goods at thrift stores when it takes away economic opportunities for those who are actually struggling to find affordable clothing?

Since the thrifting business has been booming, there was an immense increase in demand: when demand increases, so do the prices. Hence, it is detrimental for the underprivileged people who are actually in dire need of items and strongly dependent on the low prices of thrift stores. In American culture, name brands have prominent influences, so it can make all the difference for someone who is less-advantaged and is in need of a nice shirt for a scholarship interview. It can be the differ-

ence that boosts their confidence. The establishment of thrift stores were for charitable purposes and providing economic possibilities for low-paid consumers, which is a win-win situation. However, this process is disrupted if upper middle class customers continue to unintentionally snatch opportunities from underprivileged people.

In addition to the decline of economic possibilities, people who aren't in dire need of clothes will purchase clothes on impulse since the items are extremely cheap. Most upper middle class people already have enough clothes and just want more; they are more apt to buy something they might wear. Usually, the clothes may end up being low quality, the sizing may be inaccurate, or it doesn't fit the style of the rest of their clothes. These customers will only spend \$2 dollars on a shirt, but even \$2 is expensive for something that will just take up space in a closet. For this reason, instead of an effective method to recycle clothes, it is counter-intuitive because it contributes to

the waste of space if it never ends up being worn. The clothes could have ended up in the hands of someone who actually would wear the clothes, which is the correct means of recycling clothes. To ensure an efficient way of re-wearing clothes, consumers need to be intentional with their purchase which will most likely not lead them to a thrift store, leaving more opportunities for needy people to effectively buy and wear clothes.

It is not to say that if someone has money, he/she shouldn't thrift shop ever. However, it should be in America's best interest to be more conscious of our purchases, especially when it comes to bargain shopping. Sure, it is a nice shirt with a low price, but can't you afford a decently priced shirt somewhere else and maybe give someone else in urgent need the opportunity to be trendy and stylish?

PRO

“Regardless of social impact, the environmental conservation of thrifting used clothing makes the practice morally upstanding.”

Gannon Shaffer | Guest Writer

Over the past two decades, an explosive trend has risen in the streetwear and fashion communities, both off and online, that stresses the importance and relevance of paying our respects to fashion and ideas of the past. Vintage resale shops have experienced a surge in revenue since the dawn of the twenty-first century, especially on sites like Depop and Poshmark. With this newfound love for rocking vintage clothing and the like as streetwear, teens and young-adults have taken it upon themselves to uproot the hidden treasure trove of clothing that has sat dormant in thrift-stores across the country.

One of the major benefits of this trend, which is more commonly referred to as “Thrift,” surprisingly, is environmental. Thrifting, as most might expect, has helped to clear out a lot of overstocked inventory in places where people aren't as in need of inexpensive or used clothing. In most thrift and donation stores, including GoodWill or Texas Thrift, clothing and houseware is stored in massive storage rooms, and can build up over time if the community is in no need for low-cost clothing and appliances. Although no direct and substantial data can be found suggesting that thrifting has decreased the production of new clothing in the industry, there is an obvious benefit in reusing these materials and recy-

cling trends buried in the seventies, eighties, and early nineties. This shift in importance of used garments will surely help to slow down the rapid production of new clothing that uses up a lot of materials that are difficult to recycle. For example, regardless of the bigger picture, if a person were to walk into a thrift store and buy clothes that were made twenty, ten, or even five years ago, it would benefit the environment more so than if that same person were to buy brand new items from a department store. Thrifting, at its core, is a perfect example of an accessible way to recycle and reuse.

Another quite obvious benefit of thrifting is just its originally intended purpose. Thrift stores, and in some cases even resale shops, are great for providing families and individuals with a much cheaper alternative than buying new items. Providing support for lower-income households through this system is charitable for both sides, because in doing so, job opportunities are created at thrift stores. For example, whenever someone buys or sells at GoodWill, they are given the option to round their total up a few cents and donate that portion to supporting special-needs employees or staff. In this way, Goodwill is helping the community as a non-profit on not only one, but two different fronts; financially and

socially.

Secondly, thrifting has opened up a window in the world of fashion that allows easy access for lower-income or economically dependent people to experiment with the way they dress or decorate. The most prominent group using this tactic is the younger generation, those specifically still in high school and college who do not have a steady income that enables them to buy and sell industry made clothing. The difference in quality between a used five dollar sweatshirt and a brand-new ninety dollar sweatshirt can often be miniscule and unimportant, making the second option seem frivolous, imprudent, and wasteful. With a much larger pool of diverse clothing becoming available through thrifting and resale, it becomes much easier for people to experiment or tinker with new trends and ideas that the industry might not be catering to or endorsing. After all, the main goal of fashion is to use clothes that you enjoy wearing that express who you are and what you are trying to say. However, as touched on earlier, the benefits of thrifting stretch far beyond just the world of fashion and marketing.

The Fine Line Between Activism and Complaining

Amelia Engstrom

There is a current culture of activism that excites Americans, and rightfully so. Activism can bring about helpful change and shine light on uncomfortable topics. But in this spirit of inducing reform, a tendency to complain has come with it. Activism and complaining are not synonymous.

In April of 2018, the pop singer, Halsey, went on a Twitter rant about how hotel shampoo “alienates people of color.” Her reason being that the “perfumed white people shampoo” provided in hotels is not suitable for hair types other than that of caucasians. The low quality has difficulty properly cleaning the hair of people of color. What Halsey failed to realize is that hotel shampoo is not designed to be the highest quality available. It is gone through in large quantities and must be cost effective for the company. Therefore, it is sub par for all users, even --gasp-- “white people.” Sometimes the answer is simple, if you don’t like the shampoo, bring your own. Hotel shampoo is not racist.

Complaints that are thought to be constructive comments are accomplishing the exact opposite of intended. Outcries about “issues” as trivial as hotel shampoo lead to indifference. When people begin to read headline after headline and tweet after tweet about small everyday inconveniences that are distorted to seem like offenses against human morals, they become numb to the real problems.

In November of 2019, a

highly anticipated Harvard vs. Yale football game was greatly delayed. Why? Well, because climate change protesters hijacked the field and refused to leave. The protesters’ reason for the protest was to demand that Ivy League schools cease to fund fossil fuel companies. Both Yale and Harvard subsidize around \$29.4 billion and \$40.9 billion respectively to the fossil fuel industry from endowments. What did this accomplish, one may ask? The answer, absolutely nothing

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”
-Buckminster Fuller

other than the arrest of 42 protesters and the waste of everybody’s time. This event was arguably collective public whining that left the onlookers far from moved to action, but rather irked.

Protests are one of our rights as American citizens. We have the right for a reason. It can be effective. But protests such as the one at the Harvard and Yale football game are not. The idea of protests is to call attention to an issue. It can inspire others to become passionate about the topic, and it can influence de-

cision makers to change their unholy ways. This scenario merely contributed to the ever-growing stigma of disruption and altogether pointlessness around protests.

Remember when headlines began coming out detailing hardcore feminist’s rebellion against door holding? A Melbourne office cautioned men to think deeply before opening the door for a woman lest the woman feel inferior. This was a result of a survey asking the acceptability of a man holding a door for a woman. Holding the door for someone is a sign of respect and act of courtesy. Isn’t that what women are demanding anyway? Door holding is not exclusive to men. If it really makes so much of a difference, why don’t we just encourage women to also hold the door for men. Will that suffice?

At this point people just need to pick their battles. Why trouble the world with the unimportant when there are far more pressing subjects to be dealt with than who holds the door for whom? Are people just looking for things to get offended by? Focus on the real issues. Not everything needs to be picked apart and twisted from a kind action to a personal offense.

I am all for activism. Making people aware of the faults of society is the first step to reformation. Realizing how you contribute to injustice is also important. But, please, I beg of you, stop bellyaching about moronic issues. It is annoying and you will never accomplish what you want.