

## Editors Column

## The Apartment Republic: The History and Reality of Korean Housing



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Numerous high-rise apartments tower over the trees and pathway.  
[Source: Author, Thomas Lee]

In the early 1900s, sociologists developed one of the first theoretical models to explain urban social structures. The major business districts, in the middle of which are packed with skyscrapers, are wrapped around by progressively spacious single-family residences. However, South Korea's model looks quite different. The Ameri-

can high-rise buildings built in the downtown areas are seen almost everywhere in Korea.

Modernized apartments were first introduced in 1962 in Mapo, Seoul. Six stories high, the apartment community had playgrounds for children, indoor bathrooms, an AC system, and other new facilities Koreans have not yet experienced. As the population grew, the government had to build more housing in a short amount of time with a small portion of land, which ultimately led to the mass production of apartment complexes. Through media and rumors amongst people in the 1970s, apartments became a symbol of wealth, especially the building near the Han river. People's surge to live in apartments grew stronger due to their dream of living an easier and more luxurious lifestyle. Since then, apartments

have become the leading housing system in South Korea.

Today, apartments are built under brands such as Xi, Prugio, and Raemian. These apartment brands have fought for years to build the most expensive, luxurious, and grand communities. Inside one of the most exquisite community centers in Seoul, one can see indoor golf practice rooms, fitness centers, indoor jogging tracks, large swimming pools, saunas, a concierge, private movie theatres, study rooms, libraries, guest houses, sky lounges, and more. These amenities affect the name value and pride of the apartment community or the brand, which urges the architecture companies to imply more luxurious and newer facilities in newer complexes. At this point, the residents are able to satisfy all their needs inside their apartment communities.

Even though moving into these luxurious apartments is on many of Korean's bucket lists, Korean apartments still need numerous structural upgrades. In 1970, the 'Wow (or Wawoo)' apartment collapsed and killed several people. Since then, many other apartment and public buildings have collapsed without a warning, killing countless amounts of people each year. Most recently, the exterior cement on a new apartment complex under construction in Gwangju has collapsed and affected many near the surroundings. Just months ago, a building built by the same architectural company crumbled and killed 17 innocent people. These 'accidents' make many people question the laws and restrictions under architecture and the real estate companies in South Korea. When will Korean architects and buyers begin to concentrate more on the structures rather than the external displays?

## Student Reporter

## Stanford v. Berkeley: A California Rivalry



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Grade 11  
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The Stanford Axe is a cherished symbol of pride and tradition at Stanford University. The axe represents the rivalry between Stanford and the University of California, Berkeley, and has a long and storied history dating back to 1899.

It all began with a football game between the two universities in 1899. At the time, Berkeley was considered the better team and was favored to win. However, Stanford pulled off a stunning upset and won the game 14-10. In celebration of their victory, a group of Stanford students decided to take the axe that was being used to chop wood for the Berkeley bonfire and bring it back to Stanford as a trophy.



A souvenir of the Big Game and a Northern California trophy. The Stanford Axe generates pride and disappointment every year.  
[Source: Author, Sean Kim]

In 1933, the two universities came to an agreement that the Stanford Axe would be a trophy for the annual football game between the two schools known as the Big

Game. The winning team would be awarded possession of the axe for the year. The Stanford Axe is now more than just a trophy, it is a symbol of the fierce rivalry between the two universities and a source of pride for Stanford students and alumni.

Recently, Berkeley defeated Stanford and defended the axe they won in 2021. To commemorate the win, I decided to interview Berkeley students on what they thought about the tradition. Rachel, a freshman, was incredibly proud of Berkeley's win. She stated, "the axe means a lot to us. It gives us a sense of pride, and it's pretty important for our school spirit." As a devoted Berkeley supporter, Rachel cheered enthusiastically through the fourth quarter.

Lauren felt differently despite being roommates with such a fan. She said, "the axe is a little overrated, and I don't feel any real attachment to it. Berkeley is definitely better than Stanford, and the result of a football game isn't going to change that fact." Unlike Rachel, Lauren did not attend the game and chose to spend her time practicing dance instead. It's difficult to say if Rachel or Lauren holds more pride for Berkeley.

All in all, the Axe is an essential symbol of competition between Stanford and Berkeley, dating back over a hundred years. Whether the axe will lose its meaning in the future is debatable, as it will most likely remain a trophy celebrating a huge California rivalry.

## Student Reporter

## The Seal of Civic Engagement



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South High School

There are countless areas in society that could use fixing. Now, students are given a chance to make that change and be recognized for it. High schools in California are awarding a special seal to students who demonstrate excellence in areas of civic engagement. Known as the Seal of Civic Engagement, this certification requires an extensive list of criteria, but the experience and results are entirely worth it.

There are five main phases to earning the Seal of Civic Engagement. A major part of the process is the project itself. In order to demonstrate merit in civic engagement, students must identify an issue in the community and carry out a project to create positive changes in that area. Students are encouraged to pinpoint an issue they are passionate about. Some topics include homelessness, environmental issues, music, and even the basic availability of resources such as recycling on school campuses. No matter the subject, the project is recommended to be a topic of interest and one specific enough so that there can be an actual impact or change.

Once students decide on a specific issue to focus on, the next step is to conduct extensive research in order to figure out an action plan. It is also helpful to understand what other individuals and organizations are already doing to tackle the problem. After creating a plan, students must partner with an organization or institution to implement it.

If a student's project is successful, he or she qualifies for the final presentation—another crucial criterion for earning the Seal of Civic Engagement. Within an allotted time of 15 minutes, students must introduce, explain, and persuade a panel of judges of the value of their project. Based on the presentation, the judges will decide whether or not the individual is eligible for the seal. The panel is made up of a variety of individuals from the community, including teachers, admin, counselors, members of the school board, and others. Even the former mayor was part of the panel for South High School in 2021.

Additionally, three academic prerequisites dictate an individual's eligibility to participate in the pro-

## ELIGIBILITY

High school students grades nine through twelve.  
Students may earn a Seal of Civic Engagement (SCS) in either grade eleven or twelve.



## SEAL INSIGNIA &amp; RECOGNITION

Students will be recognized in their 12th grade year at the site Academic Achievement Awards in spring.

Students will receive SCS Certificate of Completion.

The SCS Seal will be awarded on the student's diploma.

## CRITERIA

## Criteria 1

Be engaged in academic work in a productive way.

## Criteria 2

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of United States and California constitutions, functions and governance of local governments, tribal governments, structures and organizations, the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy, and democratic principles, concepts, and processes.

## Criteria 3

Participate in one or more informed civic engagement projects that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on effects.



## Criteria 4

Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and disposition through self-reflection.

## Criteria 5

Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community and/or society.



Incoming juniors and seniors should consider applying for the Seal of Civic Engagement.  
[Source: Author, Alexis Choi]

gram. The first is overall GPA, which qualifies academically ambitious students who can handle the extra workload. Students must also have passed their history classes, which include U.S. History, World History, and Government. Finally, students are required to submit character references to prove their willingness to carry through with the project.

As most issues cannot be changed instantly, this entire process is a long-term commitment that occurs over the span of many months. During this time, students often run into roadblocks that arise in form of diffi-

culties communicating effectively with others, shifts in the initial plan, or unexpected results and other obstacles that can occur along the way. However, these problems are all important parts of the civic engagement process.

The process of earning the Seal of Civic Engagement is a long and difficult one, as changes do not occur like magic. Time and hard work go into making these things happen, and as challenging as it is, the journey is filled with learning and pride that comes from knowing that you are making a real change in the community!



Student Reporter

## Looking Back at Winter 2022



**Aspen Lee**  
Grade 8  
Santa Fe Christian  
Middle School



Snow Soloists and Snow Dancers on pointe performing Snow in the Nutcracker. [Source: Author, Aspen Lee]

This past year was filled with both old events we returned to and new activities, as our lives are becoming closer to what they were before the pandemic. From in-person performances to sports games, 2022 gave back the activities we missed during the pandemic. However, the winter of 2022, particularly, included more local dances, choirs, and concerts than ever before. Various studios performed the Nutcracker, friends and family led

Handel's Messiah, and even four-hand piano concerts were crafted to bring audiences together all throughout December.

Ballet Arte, a ballet studio in San Diego, California, held two shows of the Nutcracker. These performances were a stunning display of skilled dancers performing on pointe while narrating the story of the Nutcracker and the evil Mouse King. With deep facial expres-

sions showing every emotion and feet moving quickly along with the flow of the gorgeous costumes, each piece and dance was brought to life. Junior, Olivia C., stated after the show, "I really enjoyed dancing freely on stage, as it allowed me to express myself and my emotions through each and every movement." As one of the viewers in the audience, I was able to comprehend and enjoy the delicate and precise formations and elegance in each movement of the ballerinas.

Another memorable winter event was the Messiah concert performed at my church in San Diego. Messiah, George Fredrick Handel's most famous work, has three sections, with the first part about Jesus' birth being most frequently performed around Christmas. The lyrics and melody consist of text from the King James Bible about the birth of the Messiah. As the full concert would be over 2.5 hours, most choirs and churches only sing the hour-long part 1 and end with the chorus from the most famous piece, Hallelujah, in the sec-

ond part.

To top off the winter events of 2022, two talented pianists performed together in a four-hands concert, performing holiday favorites, including Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite. This wonderful piano duo truly sparked the holiday season for the audience in San Diego with an hour-long concert. An hour-long concert in San Diego for viewers of all ages. Each musical piece was projected through the entire library as the duo and vocal soloists joyfully performed their recitals. There were lots of interactions with the viewers, one of which was a call and response song called "Happy Hanukkah," where the singers would sing a line out, and those in the audience cheer and sing their response line.

Even though the new year has finally arrived, the winter of 2022 was full of wonderful moments with friends and family to complete the year. Each performance resonates in my heart as I move into 2023.

Student Reporter

## The Architectural Achievement of Hoover Dam



**Ethan Chang**  
Grade 11  
Stockdale High School

Architectural achievements are the result of builders' vision, creativity, and tenacity. Their long-lasting structures engrain themselves in the minds of future generations. One such achievement is the Hoover Dam, located on the border between Nevada and Arizona, under the oversight of the Boulder Canyon Project. The sheer size and scope of the dam is an eye-catching monument to human engineering and architectural ingenuity, helping communities and serving as a reminder of humanity's creativity.

The idea for such an enormous feat of human collaboration and infrastructure development came in 1928 under the Bureau of Reclamation, which attempted to find a way to control the unprecedented flooding of the Colorado River into the Yuma Valley. The plan, known as the Boulder Canyon Project, was introduced by Senator Hiram John-



Main electrical transformers within one of the two powerhouses of Hoover Dam. [Source: Author, Ethan Chang]

son and Representative Philip Swing. It outlined how to terraform a section of the Grand Canyon into an enormous dam to control said flooding and to provide hydroelectric power to the Southwest. The dam was built by terraforming an entire mountain and cave system and diverting

the flow of the Colorado River via man-made tunnels. The concrete, which was cooled 18 months ahead of schedule, resulted in the structure being 726.4 feet in height, as tall as a 60-story building, and 660 feet in width. All this planning, engineering, and construction were completed in a span of 5 years, from 1931 to 1936, 2 years ahead of schedule from the original date.

The construction of two station service units and 17 commercial generators in the 1930's also allowed the Hoover Dam to become the largest hydroelectric facility in the world. The power plants that contain these generators are 650 feet in length, 55 feet in width, and 75 feet in height. By the completion of the power installation in 1961, the Hoover Dam produced a total of 1,334,800 kilowatts of hydroelectric energy that powered the states of Nevada, Arizona, Califor-

nia, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico. Following its completion, the dam was named after the 31st President of the United States, Herbert Hoover, who had proposed the construction of a dam on the Colorado River 7 years before the idea gained traction with the Bureau of Reclamation.

An explosion at Hoover Dam might have terrified visitors last summer. It turned out no one was hurt, and the damage was minimal. During this winter holiday season, many tourists visited the Hoover Dam, and I was lucky to be one of them. The dam is still in great shape and is open for visitors to tour its inner workings and view its architecture. Even after a minor explosion due to a malfunctioning electrical transformer, the over 90-year-old dam is still one of the most powerful providers of hydroelectricity in the world.

Student Reporter

## The Story of Samulnori



**Sarah Kim**  
Grade 7  
Marlborough School

When you're asked to think of Korean music, K-Pop will most likely come to mind. But there is so much more to it than boy bands and idols singing pop music. There is a deep and soulful history behind Korean music, and it starts with four instruments. These percussion instruments are the basis of the music genre called Samulnori.

Samul means "four things," and nori means "to play." Rooted in nature, the Jing, a big gong, echoes the sound of the wind. Janggu, an hourglass-shaped drum, represents the rain. The Kkwaenggwari, a small, handheld gong, mimics lightning, and clouds are symbolized through the Puk, which is a barrel-shaped drum. While some of these instruments originated as far back as 57 B.C., it wasn't until the late 1970s that all four were brought together. Under the direction of Jong Sil Choi, Duk Soo Kim, Yong Bae Kim, and Kwang Soo

Lee, Samulnori was born. Adapted from Pungmul (folk music) and Nongak (farmers' music), it was an innovative way to combine these ancient rhythms and sounds.

Traditionally played to mark a bountiful harvest, Samulnori is now enjoyed at many different events. For example, elements of it were showcased at the Olympics as well as the World Cup. In Southern California, Samulnori groups carry on the tradition. In 2017, I joined the Korean Traditional Intangible Cultural Center (KTICC) under the direction of Kang Dae Seung, and was able to perform at various venues. We marked the 4th of July at the San Pedro Korean Bell of Friendship, performed at the Annual October Korean Festival, and had many other events. I felt exceptionally proud to introduce a traditional cultural genre to new listeners. It was exciting to see people clearly moved by the music we



The Korean Traditional Intangible Cultural Center team performing at the San Pedro Korean Bell of Friendship. [Source: Susan Rim]

played. Some were dancing and clapping along, and after every performance, we got a standing ovation.

In 2021, I joined the Korean Traditional Dance Institute of California (KTDIC) under the instruction of Juyoung Lim, a former student of Duk Soo Kim. Recently, I've started learning the audience favorite, the Sangmo. It's a hat with either a long, thick string or a short, thin

stick with paper streamers hanging on the edge. With every turn of their head, the patterns created by the string lift the spirits of the audience. When the performer starts dancing, the crowd often cheers in awe, and some professionals even play Samulnori instruments while spinning the hat. With the pandemic behind us, we look forward to expanding Korean culture and helping to make Samulnori come to the top of mind before K-pop.