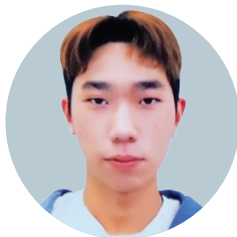


Editors Column

Exploring The Claremont Colleges



Thomas Lee
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Cleveland High School



The Cube, located at Claremont McKenna College, utilized by students to study and socialize with their peers.

[Source: Author, Thomas Lee]

At this time of the year, most seniors are finishing their college applications, and juniors start to form their college lists. Out of the thousands of selections that high school students have to consider, many leave out the liberal arts colleges.

I had the honor and privilege to experience and dive deeper into the five Claremont Colleges through their annual diversity fly-in program. The consortium consists of Pomona College, Claremont McKenna College, Pitzer College,

Harvey Mudd College, and Scripps College. During the three days of the program, I conversed with numerous students, admission officers, and professors in Q&A sessions and interviews – allowing me to gain information from a wide variety of perspectives on the college and experience it myself.

On the first day of the program, the attendees were invited to the president of Pitzer College’s house for dinner. We were welcomed by the president and his spouse, and then seated with professors and

faculty members at Pitzer College who specialized in our intended majors to talk about past and current research publications, usual lesson plans, and the benefits of being an undergraduate student there. In addition to the affinity group mixer and sponsor group session, the highlight of the first day was the student panel at the iconic Grove House. The brutally honest answers from current students about the college and their firsthand experiences cleared many of the idealized misconceptions I held about what college life would be like.

Starting at 8 AM, we had another packed schedule the following day with a campus tour, financial presentation, social events, and interviews. The highlight of the second day was the time we had to explore the villages at Claremont and Pomona. As much as I value academics and campus life, one of the most important standards when choosing a college is the college town. Being able to walk around the villages and find places to eat with friends

that I made in the program was much more helpful than doing a two-hour search on the internet.

More about the 5 C’s: students attending any of the five colleges can access the majority of resources available across all five institutions, in addition to the facilities tailored to each college. This unique format offers students the opportunity to experience both a small liberal arts college and a mid-sized university. This allows students to explore other studies outside of the college’s specialties. For example, a student at Pitzer College, which focuses on social and natural sciences, can take a business or economics course offered at Claremont McKenna.

My experience during the three days at Claremont opened my eyes to the merit of liberal arts colleges. If you seek colleges that offer small class sizes, prioritize undergraduate education, and are conveniently close to Downtown Los Angeles and the beaches, the Claremont Colleges are just for you.

Student Reporter

Negative Body Image?



Kaylyn Wee
Grade 8
Canyon Hills Junior High

Body image is the combination of the thoughts and feelings that you have about your body. As people get older, they start being exposed to different things, like the topic of body image. A person can feel positive, negative, or even both about the way they look. However, a negative perspective can cause many negative effects that can have a toll on many decisions they make in the future. But how exactly can a negative body image affect someone?

A negative body image can lead to a type of mental health disorder called body dysmorphia. Body dysmorphia and body image obsession usually start in adolescence or young adulthood, although anyone of age, men or women, can acquire this disorder. Body dysmorphia is quite common and can range from severe to mild. Some common symptoms are constantly



If a person has body dysmorphia, they tend to look at or avoid mirrors very often. The scale may tell them one thing, but their reflection tells them another.

[Source: Author, Kaylyn Wee]

looking at or avoiding mirrors, putting out great effort to conceal flaws, or always comparing oneself to others. Body dysmorphia can be caused by bullying or hurtful comments from others, and it can foster feelings of fear, ridicule, or shame.

Negative body image can also

cause eating disorders. Dieting and restricting one’s diet to achieve a look can severely damage self-esteem and happiness. There are many different types of eating disorders, but they are all harmful to a person. Eating disorders can cause health difficulties and are very dangerous to the human body. They are also extremely detrimental to one’s mental health. Past studies discovered that teens with eating disorders are more likely to self-harm and have suicidal thoughts. Those teens also had severe cases of anxiety and depression. Because of a negative body image, a person can harm their body with eating disorders.

Not only does negative body image cause eating disorders, but also unhealthy workout habits just to lose weight. Exercising is a good habit to get into, however, sometimes it can start to be controlling. Just like

eating disorders, unhealthy workout obsessions can also put a heavy focus on body image and weight. This leads to obsessive working out, exhausting the body, and can even cause negative health problems, like injuries, weak bones, or for girls irregular menstrual cycles. A person who has a negative body image may begin to excessively exercise to alter the way their body looks.

In conclusion, a negative body image can damage a person mentally and physically. A negative body image can cause a person to develop body dysmorphia, a mental health disorder that leads to eating disorders and overexercising. Those are only just some outcomes that destroy someone mentally and physically. As society grows, people should strive to love themselves and feel valued so the problem of negative body image decreases.

Student Reporter

Happy Holidays: KYCC Christmas Carnival



Erin Ryu
Grade 10
Harvard-Westlake School

On December 9, 2023, I attended the KYCC Christmas Carnival event with the Junior Korean American Women’s Association (JKAWA) volunteer group. Along with other volunteer associations, we passed out free gifts to families.

As I arrived at Hobart Elementary School, bouncy castles, inflatable obstacle courses, slime vendors, and even a chair for Santa were being set up. JKAWA was bustling around setting up stations for origami, organizing a table with stickers to decorate Polaroid photos, and unboxing mountains of gel pens and chalk packages.

The school gates opened at 10 AM, allowing children and parents to rush inside and head straight towards the gym, where they could choose their own Christmas gifts. Students were playing Korean traditional drums, or janggu, to famous pop songs, a KYCC volunteer was walking around donning

a slime green costume mimicking the Grinch, and kids were running around with Otter Pops. Although the JKAWA table did not have as many visitors initially, once more families started to mill around, the canopy was filled with activity. JKAWA students were busy taking Polaroid photos of families for their souvenirs, while others assisted children in decorating the photo with stickers and colorful frames. I was helping pass out the pens and chalk while joking around with fellow club members. As children and parents received the stationery, many kindly asked if they could also get one more for their siblings or children. Even one child excitedly came back three times just to look at the supplies. The eyes of every baby, child, and parent who visited our table lit up as they saw the plethora of colorful supplies, reminding me of the importance of giving in this holiday season.

It is common for many of us to take for granted receiving holiday gifts,



A family poses for a Polaroid shot next to a table full of free giveaways from Jr. KAWA.

[Source: Author, Erin Ryu]

but it is essential to remember that some families do not have this privilege. Recent studies show that more than 34% of families decided not to buy gifts this year due to economic crises and inflation. The KYCC carnival allowed children to have fun through the different activities and let parents decompress over the stress of providing gifts for their children. Studies also show that nearly 50% of parents and families with children below the age of 18 stress over the prospect of giving gifts. This event allowed families to bond closer together

without worrying about presents and holiday activities.

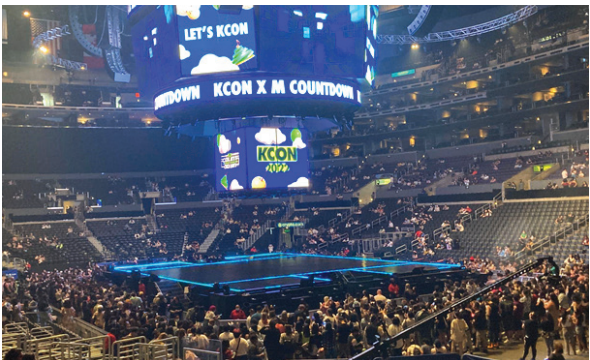
Overall, this event provided me with the time to reflect on my past experiences of receiving gifts as a child. I remember being often upset when I received something I did not like, but as I slowly grew older, and as gift-receiving has changed to gift-receiving, I am reminded of the privilege that comes with just receiving a gift. I am looking forward to attending this event once again in 2024!

Student Reporter

Authentic Korean Cultural Experiences



Angel Song
Grade 9
Harvard-Westlake School



A KCON LA concert is one of the many options in Los Angeles for experiencing K-Pop.
[Source: Author, Angel Song]

In winter 2021, I visited Korea with my mother to meet my family, tour Seoul, and watch the end-of-the-year K-pop award ceremonies. Ever since I was a child, I have been interested in Korean culture, especially K-pop. Every Friday, I would watch Korean music shows with my mom, and that winter of 2021, when I got to go to Korea and watch those award ceremonies, I was thrilled. Everyone looks forward to these fancy award ceremonies in the wintertime. Here, many K-pop singers and idols

participate to perform and win awards for their achievements throughout the year. These ceremonies are grand, fun opportunities to reflect on the year and think about notable events in the Korean entertainment scene and how they ultimately shaped the entertainment industry. Although I was only able to catch the 2021 Mnet Asian Music Awards (MAMA) on-screen in my grandparents' cozy home, I was still excited to be able to see my favorite singers perform.

Although the awards are extremely exciting, it's pretty clear that the singers are the highlight of these ceremonies. After all, many fans are there to watch their favorite singer or groups perform their remixed songs, as many singers tend to rearrange their existing songs into a newer combination just for their performance at an award ceremony. They can even collaborate with one another, performing a song or even world-famous Christmas carols. Not only do the singers work hard on these songs, but their performances are fancier and more intricate than the ones shown at regular music shows every week. Singers practice for weeks, even months, for these end-of-year celebrations and to prove to everyone their skills.

Unlike music shows that take place all year, these ceremonies are especially special because most of the relevant famous South Korean singers are present. In regu-

lar music shows, only the singers who have released songs recently get to perform, but in these award ceremonies, all singers who have made a lasting impact on K-pop that year perform for their fans. Watching the perfectly executed performances is the best part of these ceremonies. Still, another memorable part is seeing all of one's favorite singers in one place.

NewJeans, aespa, IVE, ENHYPEN, RIIZE, ZB1, you name it! All of these fan-favorite 4th generation K-pop idols are present at prestigious award ceremonies at the end of the year to perform for their fans and amaze the world with their musical presence. Watching my favorite singer perform at weekly Korean music shows and at the winter award ceremonies has always been the best part of my winters; it isn't the carols or the Christmas tree, but these award shows are full of happiness and enjoyment from both fans and singers.

Student Reporter

Social Media is Heavily Influencing Our Lives



Ian Lee
Grade 10
Van Nuys High School

Many people may argue that social media is the best thing the Internet has to offer. After all, you can socialize with people hundreds of miles away, find out about the newest trends with a click, be up-to-date on the news, and do so much more. However, as social media is becoming a more prominent feature in our lives, it seems to be controlling us in ways that we aren't aware of, both good and bad.

Social media can be very fun, but sometimes it can even be addicting. The average teenager uses about 5 hours of social media every day, without them noticing it. Many studies have shown that spending a long time on social media can lead to depression, anxiety, loneliness, and even self-harm. As we are on social media, we tend to look at things we enjoy. On the other hand, it could also make us compare ourselves with other people in a negative way. We may think This person has a better life than me or They seem so much happier than me. In actuality, the person may not actually be



While social media can be a good thing, sometimes students spend too much time on it and not enough being active.
[Source: Author, Ian Lee]

feeling those ways, but social media may put pressure on people to be who they aren't. When I asked one of my friends how it feels to be on social media after he showed me a funny TikTok, he replied, "It's fun to watch what others have posted, but what you watch shouldn't solely determine what you do with your life." Interviewing another one of my friends, he said that posting pictures is hard work because you have to try and fit everyone's perspectives. However, my friend said that in a joking manner, there still is an un-

derlying truth in that. Social media can make someone feel pressured to make it seem like they are having a good time or become someone they are not. It can also lead kids to stay indoors more often or be constantly staring at a screen. As kids spend more time on social media, less time is being spent enjoying the sun or getting physical exercise. Even at school, on days when we are supposed to be running on the track, I always see a few people sneaking in the back to get on their phones or walking while being on social media. While my teacher was teaching us a lesson, she pointed out at least 4 different people who were using their phones. Social media may be a good communication tool, but it also pressures you to live an idealized lifestyle and deters you from getting physical activity.

Many people also turn to social media when looking for news or trying to find out something they are interested in. Although this is a good way to find out about the newest trend, it may be difficult to find trustworthy news. According to

moneycontrol.com, as many as 23% of people on social media lie. This could lead to people getting false information or experiencing something called confirmation bias. Confirmation bias is when people with an opinion on a subject see agreement with their opinion, which boosts their confidence that their opinion is right, regardless of its accuracy. It may also be hard to distinguish what is true from what is false, and this could lead to false information being passed around, causing people to have wrong information that may lead to unwanted behaviors.

Overall, social media is a very big part of our lives, so much so that it is influencing our actions like lying to make ourselves seem cooler or following trends that we normally wouldn't do. However, no matter how much we want to blame social media, humans still need to be responsible for using it. It can be tough to get away from social media controlling our lives, but getting away from your screen is better than being controlled by it.

Student Reporter

What Would Happen Without Electronics?



Isaac Lee
Grade 7
Oliver Wendell Holmes Middle School

Have you ever imagined a world with no phones, computers, or anything related to electronic devices? This would be a devastating situation for humans today. With so many people glued to their devices, the world would turn into chaos in a matter of seconds if people did not have access to them. This unsettling thought would cause everyone to panic because we use electronics every day.

One of the first issues that you will encounter without electronics is that you will not have an alarm to wake you up from bed. You would also not be able to get ready because you do not have access to water, or power at all. Both of these things are sent to you by computer systems. You would not be able to use things we use every day, like cars, phones, and computers. Without these

everyday appliances, it would be very difficult to live peacefully. For example, you would have to find a water source in order to just brush your teeth. Although many people think of only phones or computers when we say electronics, there are so many other things that will be taken from them if there are no electronics in the world. Although there are many problems with addictions to electronics, they also benefit humans in so many ways every day, making it very uncomfortable to live without technology in your life at all.

Even without electronics in your life, humans can still physically survive. It is just that it would be much harder. The world would feel like our lives went back in time to centuries ago. We would become more like cavemen and nomads, having to



Without electronics, we would not be able to do many of our everyday things.
[Source: Author, Isaac Lee]

hunt and gather resources by hand. We would have to rely on our survival skills and adapt to nature since we do not have the appliances to do everything for us. This could actually jeopardize the health and wellbeing of people. People with disabilities would be at a tremendous disadvantage because they are not getting the help that they need to get. That would be a serious problem.

With all this in mind, living without technology would be a nightmare. People would suffer and experience hardships every day trying to do something as small as waking up on time and getting ready. We are blessed to have all these things, and it would be a disaster not to have electronics in our lives. It would be a catastrophe.