

Mission

Aletheia (ah-LAY-thee-uh), which means “truth” in Greek, is a student outreach publication that strives to provide a voice for all students at Lynbrook High School. Inspired by Los Gatos High’s *Reality Check* and Monta Vista’s *Verdadera*, *Aletheia* was created to facilitate communication and overcome stigmas concerning prevalent and taboo issues within the Lynbrook com-

About

At the beginning of the school year, the *Aletheia* staff designates a list of monthly topics pertaining to the realities of high school. Each issue comprises of firsthand experiences submitted anonymously by Lynbrook students and alumni, professional articles relating to that month’s theme, and resources compiled by the student staff. Finalized newsletters are uploaded online and emailed to Lynbrook families who have requested to be on the mailing list. Back issues can be found on our website, www.lhsaletheia.org, under Archives.

The content in *Aletheia* is composed by the students of Lynbrook High School in San Jose, California. Ideas and opinions expressed within the publication are not necessarily reflected by members of the school admin-

Submissions

All Lynbrook students and alumni are eligible to submit stories. We publish all submissions that adhere to our guidelines, which are posted on the website. The Aletheia staff is committed to preserving the integrity of your content and will not make any changes, with exception to certain profanity (which are asterisked-out) and basic spelling errors. We do not edit stories for grammar or syntax.

Our May topic is What My Friends Don’t Know About Me; stories are due by April 26th. If you are interested in contributing, a submission box and a suggestion form for future topics are both available online.

*Expressing what
remains unspoken.*

Student Staff: Adam Zhang, Aishwarya Nene, Alyssa Zhang, Divyya Munshi, Esther Kao, Kasturi Pantvaidya, Nishna Kommoju, Renee Cai, Sabrina Jen, Stephanie Li, Steven Chao

Advisers: Cindy Wen & Miko Otoshi

I define cheating as deliberately taking someone else's work or answers without permission and using it as your own. Over the years in school, my definition of cheating has converged into something more like plagiarism than the traditional school definition. I don't think collaborating on homework is cheating, nor do I think getting a friend to let you copy down homework is cheating, and here's why: Collaboration results in a better understanding of the subject at hand for both parties, and as a result, no one is harmed. Copying down someone else's homework when they give you permission should not be counted as cheating either, because a) you have their permission and b) it's not unfairly taking advantage of anyone either because permission was given. If anything, the person copying it down is harming him/herself by not bothering to understand the material, and if they choose to do that, then so be it. The real problem is when you start copying from sources all over the place without permission, or ignoring the directions that say the work must be original. That is cheating, and that should be punishable. But for some things as petty as copying down homework because there wasn't time to finish it last night should not be counted as cheating.

~ ~ ~

What's the point in taking a test when half the class walks in knowing all the questions, answers, and exactly how to solve each problem?

"When people cheat in any area, they diminish themselves--they threaten their own self-esteem and their relationships with others by undermining the trust they have in their own ability to succeed and their ability to be true."

-Cheryl Hughes

Cheating done right: My friend and I know the material to earn a 90% above on the tests (ok, maybe 87% sometimes) (include curves). We swap homeworks sometimes. He does my Calculus homework, along with his and I do his English essay thesis. We use each other's specializations so we can maximize time we get to study for tests. It's all about the tests and quizzes. If two organisms have a symbiotic academic

relationship and both can get As on exams in the end, then it's totally justified. I mean it takes him 25-30 minutes for each math homework (he just shows me the work / answers), and for me it takes 20 minutes for both our thesis (assuming this is not for research reports in Aplac or Aplit - that we do ourselves). So why? The following equation: Higher Test Score => Higher GPA => Better College => Better Job => Better Connections => Friends last longer (if you get into a very crap college, you will lost your friends who become elitist, no joke) = > Better life for you and those around you. Sadly, it's the truth whether you like it or not. You can deny it, but you will live it all the way through. Think about the net result in the end. It's always the net result. I don't feel guilty because the education system is already overcrowded, pretty disconnected with students, and broken, especially at public universities (as I heard rumors).

"The man who hints that you are a thief is almost sure to have a large, vulnerable area of dishonesty in his own inner self."

-Gordan R. Dickinson

Cheating is something that people at lynbrook have to deal with everyday, be it copying homework, receiving answers from a quiz, or plagiarizing. im pretty sure at least 80% of the students have cheated before. The pressure at lynbrook is so high that everyone is determined to do well, no matter what it takes. there are so many times when after i take a test, im ambushed with people asking "what was on the test? was it hard?" yes, i do understand that people are worried, and so am i. but that doesnt give them the right to gain an unfair advantage over the ones who had no "heads up" on what was going to be on the test. i had cheated once before, and the rest of the time i was so paranoid, afraid that the teacher would catch me and talk to me afterschool- worse yet- talk to my parents. this kind of risk is one that many students take everyday. im sure we all know people who cheat, wether it be everyday, or once in a while. yet somehow, we almost never tell, and sometimes even participate in the cheating by enabling these people and giving them the answers. why? well we dont want to seem "stuck up" or caring only about ourselves, or too competitive. its instinct, we dont want to be that one guy who doesnt share his answers because he "wants to beat the rest". at lyn-

brook, the refusal to share answers or help cheat is seen as “im better than you” or a goodygoody two shoes act. its almost seen as... as a betrayal! the academic policy at lynbrook is so strict, yet i find it ironic and hilarious that rarely people get caught cheating. im not sure if the teachers just choose to overlook it, or if they really dont know whats going on. whatever it is, the system works for us. even though it may be harming us, as a student, im not saying that cheating should be advocated, but it does save us a few hours of much needed sleep and rest.

~ ~ ~

I don't cheat because I don't think I could get away with it.

“I would have been a black belt in karate much sooner, but the store was sold out of Sharpie markers.

-Jarod Kintz

According to the guidelines of academic integrity here, I am a cheater. Do I feel like one? Absolutely not. Do I even consider myself a cheater? No way. But I would be considered a cheater because I share and receive information about tests/quizzes. It's actually not even really helpful info. More along the lines of “Not too many definition questions”, “know your verbs”, or “don't worry about the battle names”. And I give about the same amount/type of info. Which is considered helping someone cheat, but I don't think so. I'm relieving their nerves and not at all harming anyone or anything. Definitely NOT like the dumbasses who tell others the exact questions, and especially on tests/quizzes with curve grading. Seriously? Just how stupid could you get? It really pains me to know that all my studying doesn't amount much to those lucky people who have the class later and have friends that are stupid cheaters and get the questions. So really, I definitely consider that cheating, whereas I don't consider what I do cheating. It's more of a way to be assured that you don't have to be super stressed, or that you're just screwed. With my type of “cheating”, I don't consider it cheating so I don't feel guilty. Not at all. There are a few classes in which many people cheat together, and the teacher doesn't even seem to care. I just can't understand it. If the test/quiz doesn't really matter, why have it? Just

put some grades in then because you obviously don't give a platypus about it. So there's no point in telling the teacher. But with individual cheating, it's hard to tell too. There's no real evidence, and you don't really benefit from “doing justice” anyways, so why bother? If reporting cases of cheating could be done anonymously, I would be all for it. If those full-blown cheaters can continue with their activity, I'll still be guilt-free with my “cheating” style.

~ ~ ~

When I was younger, I cheated a lot. I remember one person told me the answers to half the problems on the geometry tests for the whole of 8th grade. Nowadays, I don't cheat on tests, not because I'd feel guilty if I did(although I probably would feel a little), but because there's no good opportunity to, and I really would not like to get caught doing so. I do sometimes cheat on homework though, but who doesn't?

~ ~ ~

The “biggest” cheat I've ever done is trying to look at someone else's paper to TRY and cheat but I never really succeeded at that. I've let other people copy from me for homework before out of guilt and sometimes out of pure “generosity” because I'm just like that. Apparently copying someone else's homework is cheating, but how do teachers know? What if we REALLY are just looking at someone's answer to check or because we need to compare? I can be a good person. I hate seeing things go wrong. When I see someone cheating, I try not to notice but I never tell on them. I completely understand why someone would cheat. Teachers these days give homework as if they are the only class anyone has to worry about. At least: an hour for math, an hour for science, an hour for history, an hour for lit, and an hour for a language or elective. That's five hours. Then, add your extra-curriculars. That can be up to eight hours. Add school and you have sixteen hours. As teenagers, we need to socialize. Add two hours and you have eighteen. Six hours to sleep. But there's also the extra stuff like dinner with family, relaxing time such as naps and facebooking. That can be over twenty four hours. How can teachers expect us not to ever cheat? Some students do have time to slowly work out their

homework, but that's not common at Lynbrook. You can probably find adults that have less to worry about. I'm sure everyone has cheated, or at least be tempted to. Sure, it's wrong, but I'm sure we all agree that cheating is motivated from the busy schedules we have. Our busy schedules make us stressed and with this stress, sometimes we have nothing to do but cheat. Don't get me wrong, cheating is bad. You shouldn't try to pass a class that you really don't understand because it's a lie. What if you cheated to be a doctor? I for one would feel sorry for your patients... If you're going to cheat, think about whether it really is worth it or not.

"I would prefer even to fail with honor than win by cheating."

-Sophocles

Asking people from periods before you what the test has is not cheating. It's common sense. I have no idea why it's classified as cheating. You have an opportunity, taking it won't hurt anyone, there's nothing wrong with it. Knowing the questions won't help you if you don't understand the material, and it's impossible to memorize tons of stuff in the short time-frame of a couple of hours. It's like the Chunin exams from Naruto, one part is testing the ninja's ability to cheat effectively and not their actual knowledge.

~ ~ ~

I ask people for overall test questions, like what type and if they're really specific or just concept - based. I hate people who actually give/ask for the exact question, and especially on curved tests.

~ ~ ~

In every adventure, there is a shortcut. The shortcut makes it easier for the adventurer to finish earlier and without as much effort, at the expense of the journey. The journey is where one makes mistakes, gets frustrated, and hits dead ends. However, it's through the journeys that one learns, understands, and grows. In education*, cheating is that shortcut. It allows one to pass a class without putting in the effort and time required. However, it comes at the expense of learning and growing. So why do I cheat? Sometimes, I feel my

classes are merely just a means to an end. I find that my time is not worth being put in for the experience, or the journey. For this reason, I take the shortcut, along the route that I find menial and boring, so that I can better spend my time on endeavors that interest me more. *At Lynbrook, I can hardly call what's going on inside the classroom is education. It's more like just a bunch of cramming and brute forcing, rather than perceiving and understanding. Perhaps this is another reason why I cheat.

~ ~ ~

As Machiavelli is often misquoted: "The ends justify the means." I cheat. I don't beat myself up over it too much, either. I've lied, changed my grades, copied others' work... et cetera. Still, why the hell SHOULD I feel guilty? The amount of work on my shoulders is way more than I can handle. (And don't give me any of that bullshit about how I shouldn't overdo it on the extracurriculars and AP courses. I didn't want them, did I? But you know who did? The colleges. Seriously, look at the kind of competition you face trying to get into a good college.) If cheating gets me ahead, I'll cheat. Hell, if I need to, I'll cheat in college as well. I can nearly guarantee that the majority of people that have gotten to the top of the socioeconomic pyramid have lied, connived and mucked about to do so. The challenge is just to cheat better than everyone else.

"Someone who thinks the world is always cheating him is right. He is missing that wonderful feeling of trust in someone or something."

-Eric Hoffer

I think the definition of cheating is so vague that nobody really cares anymore. I know that admin and others have tried to clearly define it, but there's just too many scenarios to account for. Anyway, by certain definitions, I do cheat on homework. Yes, I get answers from others. I'm a slow student in some classes, and it takes me forever to grasp some concepts, let alone the problems. I rather dislike it when teachers teach you how to do certain problems and then the homework has super difficult ones that require fundamental intuition in that particular subject. It takes me so long to understand the problems and these days I just don't

have enough time. There is just a constant stream of homework from all classes, no matter how many extra-curriculars you have that day. I cheat as the last resort. When it's getting really late and I can't understand something, I just ask for answers to have something to turn in. To be honest, I don't care, because I'm going to learn the material later for the test anyway when I have more time. And plus, I don't plan to major in anything related to the classes I cheat in, so I don't think not understanding the concepts is that important to me in the first place.

~ ~ ~

Cheaters never win... ...Is a phrase that's absolutely false. Which is why I cheat.

"Honesty for the most part is less profitable than dishonesty."

-Plato

When the teacher left the room, one student put on a brazen display of academic dishonesty. The whole class saw; no one spoke up. I e-mailed the teacher later. I felt terrible that no one had attempted to stop this student. I had been too shocked to do anything myself. I needed to be honest to myself. If I let this student go, it would mean that I was indifferent to his actions, and I was not. Dismissing this would have been an insult to the teacher, who trusted his students in his absence. And it was honestly for this student's own good. He needed to understand that what he did was wrong, blatantly wrong, and he could not be allowed to get away with it. I am an honest person, and I don't do anything that I believe will sully my integrity. I follow my moral compass, and all I ask is that others follow theirs.

~ ~ ~

Honestly, yes. I have cheated, and if you say you've never cheated before...I won't believe you. Whether it's copying someone else's homework or looking up answers online for a project, you have cheated. I have cheated and I'm not very proud of it. I've actually had a teacher that caught me plagiarizing and decided to give me one more chance and not inform anyone about it. THANK GOD. That was honestly the scariest thing

ever. Knowing that that faith of my reputation relied on my teacher. But, till this day my parents still don't know about that incident. I obviously haven't learned my lesson from that teacher because I still cheat. I copy homework from my friends, I ask my friends what is going to be on the test that I have later in the day, and I have even told my friend the answer in the middle of the test. Whether it's you doing the cheating or helping your friend cheat, cheating is cheating and it's not something I'm proud of. I don't know why I do it even though I know it's so wrong and it's not something I want people to know I do. Maybe it's the pressure to be perfect, to be the smartest, to get an A. But hey, that's Lynbrook.

~ ~ ~

I've never cheated in my life. The title disgusts me to no end.

"The greatest gift you can give to those around you is honesty. Sometimes honest words may sting the heart, but dishonesty pierces deep into the soul."

-Nishan Panwar

MANUEL FABRIQUER

Author, Founder and President of
College Planning ABC

Manuel Fabriquer is founder and President of College Planning ABC and author of the new book "Go to College For Free"- College Planning ABC's Guide To Finding Scholarships, Financial Aid and Free Tuition Awards. He is the architect of leading edge strategies that are shaving monumental expenses off the traditional cost of higher education. With his guided expertise, students and their families are directed to deploy strategies that correctly navigate the financial aid maze. With more than 14 years of experience in the financial services industry, Fabriquer has worked to extend College Planning ABC's leadership position by expanding customer and partner initiatives. He has orchestrated the market shift from limited and conflicting resources to a complete in-house solution for college bound students in need of financial assistance.

Fabriquer has been seen on over 380 television networks from CBS, NBC, FOX, MSN, US News and World Report, Wall Street Journal, Money Magazine, and national radio.

A few weeks ago, I was invited by your peer group to discuss concerns of cheating at Lynbrook. I read over numerous personal accounts and listened to students describe their own personal experiences of cheating in school. I sat there, listening to students trying to justify their academic transgressions, I left feeling utterly disgusted with what I had heard. It was these students and their predecessors that had built Lynbrook's reputation as a distinguished school, and in my mind, that distinction now came into question. While I recognize that the specter of cheating is casting a larger shadow in schools, I remain steadfast in the belief that a little bit of cheating is still cheating. I understand the peer pressure of trying to get into the top colleges in the nation and students are fighting to gain the slight edge over their competition. In my understanding, the norm at Lynbrook is, "If everyone is doing it, then it should be acceptable." This is the similar adage that I was told when I was young, "If all of your friends jumped off the bridge, it doesn't mean you need to do so". I think that the pressure to attend a great college, get a great job, become successful has been ingrained in many students mind that this is all they know.

Undoubtedly, technology has given students more resources, and students have found ways to use this to their advantage during test taking. The use of iPhones, uploading pdf forms to their calculator, finding old exams online, have become common practice.

How do students deal with it?

I can answer this with one word, Ethics. You either have it or you don't, it's pretty simple. This is internal, and you are going to have to deal with your own psyche. You are going to have to look at yourself in the mirror and decide if the decisions you make today is going to make you a better person. Can you look at yourself in the mirror and be proud of who you are and what you have done? If not, then change. Nobody is forcing you to cheat on the tests, collaborating with homework is sometimes encouraged by the teachers. However, there is a difference between collaboration and straight copying.

Can this change at your school? Sure, it can but most likely it won't in one year. It will take leadership and a new way of thinking for many students. It will take a new standard of ethics and integrity that would have to be instilled upon the students. It's up the individual to be a strong, independent thinker and not succumb to this norm of cheating. Peer pressure exists, but it's up to you to buy into this way of thinking. Here are a few questions to ask:

Does the college make the student?

Or rather, does the student make the college?

Does it really matter where the student graduates from?

Is the school going to make the student more successful than the other?

Here is a resource that you should considering reading from Allan Kruger, Princeton University.

<http://dataspace.princeton.edu/jspui/bitstream/88435/dsp01gf-06g265z/1/563.pdf>

The result of his research will surprise you. If what you thought to be true ended up being not true, when would you want to know? Check out Allan Kruger's other research.

How do parents deal with cheating?

I don't think that parents even realize that this is going on. They probably think that their little angel can do no wrong. I'm sure that the students that are cheating are good students that have intentions to do well in school. However, they struggle with time to do everything from leadership, sports, AP classes, music, clubs, friends etc. There is not enough time in the day to everything and this is why they turn to cheating. A mere form of efficiency to get things done to keep their, "balanced life". Regardless, it's still not acceptable in the academic system.

I think that parents don't realize how difficult it is to be admitted to the top college in America, and many parents just want the end result of getting the "Golden Ticket" of admission. Parents should speak with their student about their expectations and encourage them to do their best in school. Let their student know that no matter what happens with college admissions that you will be proud of them. Pressuring the students to get the best grades and to graduate at the top of their class can be stressful for the student. Parents need to take it easy and stop looking at Naviance or school loop every day to see their student's grades. Not getting into the top colleges in America is not the end of the world for your family or student, at least it shouldn't be. You have done well with raising your student to be a good person, who has the values and morals that you have instilled in their life. They will be fine in college and will succeed in life. Trust yourself and your student that things will work out for them.

There is a book I want you to read, "Colleges that change student's lives" by Loren Pope. This book will open your eyes to other possibilities to consider when applying to college.

Tools for Teens and Parents

For additional resources, turn to these sources:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/05/100511173829.htm>

<http://chronicle.com/blognetwork/castingoutnines/2008/04/10/handling-academic-dishonest/>

<http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/exam/cheat.html>

<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/on-education/2008/12/02/cheating-on-the-rise-among-high-school-students>

<https://www.stanford.edu/class/engr110/cheating.html>