

## 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. Back issues can be found on our website, [www.lhsaletheia.org](http://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 administration or faculty.

This is the seventh issue of *Aletheia* for the 2014-15 school year.

## 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 next topic is Separation; submission are due September 20th. If you are interested in contributing, a submission box and a suggestion form for future topics are both available online.

*Expressing what  
remains unspoken.*

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I wish that I didn't worry about being judged. I wish that I could just be whoever I want without feeling self-conscious or worried. I wake up every morning unhappy and unwilling to go to school. I change my clothes multiple times so that I don't look too bad, or like I'm trying too hard. In fact, just today I knew I had a guy I really like in one of my classes and changed my outfit feeling that it was too childish. I was afraid to wear something that expressed who I am. This feeling is awful. I wish I didn't have to do such things. Although, I suppose I have it easy compared to people around me that are or were judged everyday out loud for everyone to hear, not just for what they wear but what they look like, how they speak, or even who they love. The last one is the worst. The fact that people are not able to say "I love you" to just anyone for fear of being judged, hated, or even killed in some places. It sounds cheesy but I didn't realize what world peace really meant for a long time and although it has many definitions I think one is people being content with who they are and who everyone around them is. Really though, I don't deserve to say these things because I too judge people. The second someone walks in I'm judging them without even realizing it. My pride stops me from correcting myself sometimes and I regret it. I hope one day I become secure with who I am and I step away from the judgement. I hope that someday, eventually, I find myself.

*"Justice and judgement lie often a world apart."*

*-Emmeline Pankhurst*

After thinking about everything in retrospect, basically everything that I struggle with was and is caused by my fears of being judged. I can't do anything without thinking beforehand, "Will this fit the norm? Will people think I'm weird if I say this? Will my ideas cause others to look at me from a different angle?" I can't raise my hand and confidently participate in class. I can't express myself because I'm scared to. I don't know where I get these feelings from. It's not like I was bullied and people don't come up to me and make me feel bad about myself. The thing is that I know that I shouldn't care what people think. I KNOW THAT. I just can't bring myself to lead my life that way. I'm a coward. I know that I'll be a lot happier if I just stop caring about what others think about me, but it seems impossible for me to change.

I do not feel judged right now, but I usually judge myself. I judge about how I look, my shyness, and my weaknesses. However, I do not feel like changing them, which results me to gradually break down my confidence. I do judge others, but I never say. Instead, I judge others in my mind. I judge others about how their grades are, how popular they are, and how naive they are. I feel puberty is likely to make people more sensitive and more judgemental. People feel that they are judged, therefore, they want to transfer the pain to others. It is a twisted fact, but I think it is quite reasonable. When I was young, I got judged a lot. As a result, I did not feel confident about myself. I really want to tell the people who judged me that do not judge people please, people can be hurt badly even you were joking.

*"It has always seemed that a fear of judgement is the mark of guilt and the burden of insecurity."*

*-Criss Jami*

I can't remember the last time I was happy while sober. You can't tell of course; seventeen years in my household and I'm no longer able to express emotion unashamedly. Seventeen years in the Silicon Valley and I can no longer help but tie my self worth to resume-worthy milestones. If you think it hurts to be judged for looks, life choices, etc., I assure you it hurts a thousand times more to be held to standards you also believe valid. It f\*\*\*ing sucks to judge yourself constantly; it f\*\*\*ing sucks to fail in your own eyes. I'm three years out of Lynbrook and I have to say that while it's prepared me well academically for college, my mental health is in shambles. I'm at a great college; I've great career prospects. But I'm tired. I'm mentally abusive to myself. I drank myself to a stupor last February after a particularly devastating loss, and then I drunk-dialled my parents. Oh who cares if it sounds pathetic; I thank God for that cooler of wine because without it I would've killed myself. I can't scream for fear of the judgement I would face, the same judgement I dispense almost instinctually to others when they fail. ... I want to keep typing but I'm too tired so I'll leave you on an optimistic note, a silly bit of pseudo-philosophy from the last time I tripped: "My senses are a medley of pain and orgasm. I close my eyes but it's like I'm peeking through." Addendum to my former post I wanted to clarify that when I said great college

I meant Ivy-caliber. Reading back my post it is easy to imagine some f\*\*\*ed up failure (and maybe I am all that) but in a very Lynbrookian sense. Just need someone to understand that even those kids shipping off to Stanford and MIT can have a rough time. I'm human and I'm hurting. That said, good luck to all graduating - next year may well be a pressure cooker but it's also college and you will have fun and you will do decently. Lynbrook sucks for mental health, but it's fantastic for your career.

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I get a bad test grade and then people bully me. It makes me feel sad because people judge me before hand and think that I'm hella smart cuz I'm Indian. but I'm actually stupid af so then ppl bully me hella because they judged me previously and thought I was smart but I actually wasn't. so when they saw my straight D's they bullied me and now I wanna just go home and cry. therefor judge is bad.

*"Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in."*

*-Isaac Asimov*

I used to judge people a lot. For really stupid things like what they wore, who their friends were, who they were dating, what sports they played. And doing that kept me from actually getting to know the person and made me miss out on some pretty great people. There was this girl who was friends with a recent friend I'd made. I thought she was really weird so for the first year I knew her I never even made an effort to talk to her. We would make basic small talk out of courtesy but nothing real. But the next year in eighth grade we ended up having the exact same schedule and sat next to each other in 4 out of 7 classes so we were forced to get to know each other. It was honestly the best thing that happened to me because she ended up becoming my best friend. After we started to talk and I learned about her all those judgements I made seemed so dumb and completely irrational. And it was when we became friends that I realized I shouldn't judge people, especially if I've never even had a real conversation with the person. That girl is honestly one of the best people I know and it makes me wonder

how many other great people I missed out on because i made rash judgements about them. It was really hard at the beginning to stop making judgements because it was so ingrained in my system to assess people that it was almost automatic. But the more people I got to know on a deeper level, the easier it become to let that go. Now when I see someone who does something that isn't conventional or does something I don't agree with I try to understand why and keep myself informed instead of opinionated. And I also realized that it's okay to not agree with someone. Realizing that honestly gave me a new sense of freedom and I really hope more people start to see that too.

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For the most part I don't experience much judgement based on my superficial aspects, but that could just be me not being good at reading people. On the other hand, other people's quick judgements of me have sometimes arguably been pretty bad for me. This feels like a stupid example, but there was a period of time when I literally just didn't smile because I had braces. As a result I think I came off as this cold, mean person who would be difficult to work with, which would result in people sort of steering clear of me, which in turn would lead to me being even more withdrawn. I'm guilty of judging people quickly as well--Challenge Day got rid of that a little bit (I am a lot less prone to thinking of anybody as boring now, and I get a little mad when people call somebody "conventional" or "average" because nobody's made of cardboard) but there are still times when I see a short Asian girl with a Jansport backpack and a cardigan I think to myself, "Wow, she's so typical," and that's not okay at all.

*"Don't judge a man unless you have walked a mile in his shoes."*

*-Proverb*

People judge each other all the time because everyone has his or her own standard on something. However, in order to be polite to others, not many people will judge others publicly. They judge others often with their friends or someone they are close with. Even though judgement can be just an opinion, it can be hurtful sometimes when the words become offensive to certain people. No one is perfect, so we

should really reserve our judgement on other people. I really believe people should just evaluate themselves instead of others because other people's behaviors are not our business at all. Since people judge others secretly, it makes people who are judged anxious about the judgements. Eventually, they will start to distrust people around them, and this is not something we want in Lynbrook since Lynbrook is suppose to be full of love and care. I have seen my friends breaking up with each other when one of them starts making little judgements about the other person secretly with her another friend. The person being judged later found out and started to distrust the person who is judging. Later on, they are not friends anymore and stop having communication. Therefore, judging others is really hurtful and should be avoided.

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I'm the most judgemental asshole I know.

*"It is not for me to judge another man's life. I must judge, I must choose, I must spurn, purely for myself. For myself, alone."*

*-Hermann Hesse*

There are a lot of things about myself that I would never tell people. Things like the fact that I hate reading. I'm a slutty virgin. I'm on birth control. I'm not actually passionate about God. I've done drugs. Last week some guy tried to rape me. I know that you-- the one reading this-- has judged me on at least one of these things. You don't even know who the hell I am.

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Yes, I believe I feel judged. Why? Because I judge other people. I don't know why, I just do. Judgement has affected me because it forces you to change and it started to make me realize to not give any f\*\*s about what anyone thinks of me because they are not in my shoes. I'm not in their shoes and they aren't in mine. I will live my life how I want. I will take risks that they won't take. Being judge at first startled me and then it became something like "normal" and

then I realized I should focus on whats best for me and not whats best for them. I don't know how to answer question number 4. The community can judge you however they like but you do you. You be you. It's okay if people judge you. Maybe you're doing something right, maybe you're wrong. In the end do whats best for you, no one knows it but you. Only you know if your doings are right or wrong.

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Why is college judgement so real? I don't give a flying \*\*\*\* where people get into college, or how they went to a bad school. Just today, as I sit and write this, a stranger at the place I teach asked if I knew somebody who turned out to be a good friend of mine. His next question was "so what happened to \_\_\_\_'s college apps? I heard he didn't get into anywhere good." I had to resist the urge to throttle the poor bastard right then and there. This friend in question will, in my opinion, beat us all out in the real world. Charisma, creativity, sensibleness, and confident. These characters you don't find in people at Lynbrook and cannot really express on paper, but in the long run, matter more. Don't judge people on their colleges, and if you do, don't be surprised when 10 years down the line, they are doing better than your myopic opinionated and probably insecure mind influenced fantasy predicted.

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I used to judge myself, under the influence of society's standards. I felt like I couldn't be honest to people about the grades I was getting, and that those grades below an A were indications of my intelligence or lack thereof. That was sophomore year. I let it eat me up inside, and it was a learning process for me to get out of it. Today, I don't give a shit what people have to say about me if they don't even know the story behind it or try to listen first. People will gossip, people will judge. There's nothing that can stop it from happening, but the way I react to it is now very different that I would've reacted two years ago. It's my life I have to live, and if I let one comment or condescending look affect me to the point I want to cry in a bathroom or feel upset, no one cares so there is no point. I think judgement roots from not being open-minded. I've learned to become more accepting of others and more open-minded to differences, because everybody goes through similar



situations at one point of their lives but with different roots and causes. I think being open-mindedness will help all of us connect better and less separated. We're all at Lynbrook together (well I'm leaving), so why don't we support and love each other instead of judging and making rude comments?

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Post college results, it's easy to see so many Lynbrook seniors judging others on results, if not silently. "Wtf why did he/she go there, how'd they get in while so and so didn't get in to x College, they totally deserved it more!" It's definitely frustrating, especially as one who didn't live up to anyone's expectations of me, I definitely shocked all of my friends, family, and most importantly myself but sometimes there's so little I can do when it is a relatively random process. The best I can do is to try and ignore all the judgements of people going wtf and try and keep moving on, but it is frustrating for sure

*"People hasten to judge in order not to be judged themselves."*

*-Albert Camus*

Everyone judges everyone else. Society judges you. Colleges judge you. Your parents judge you. Even your friends judge you. Its sort of like you gotta hang around the 'right' people and eliminate the rest. We were taught to judge people ever since we were born. This person talks to much, he needs detention. This person has good grades, she needs an award. Judgement is the reason that people can't be 'themselves' in public, or even in private. Sure, I enjoy being occasionally childish. Sure, I enjoy being lewd. But I can't do that in public or I'd probably get smacked by Ramirez and people will look at me funnier than they already do. Maybe if people stopped judging each other so much, society would be a much happier place to live in.

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People say all the time that it doesn't matter what anyone else says about you, they can judge you all they want but it doesn't have to affect you but it does. I'm not sure if it's because I'm sensitive or what have you, but prejudice and pre-created assumptions about

what a person seems to be/act/think/perform like hurt both the judger and the judged.

*"How easy it is to judge rightly after one sees what evil comes from judging wrongly."*

*-Elizabeth Gaskell*

F\*\*\* my dad man my whole life he's been telling me I'm worth nothing I just needed to tell someone that F\*\*\* that f\*\*\*\*t ass bitch

~ ~ ~

I'd be a hypocrite to judge you for drinking or smoking, but when it gets in the way of your reliability I am tempted to cut ties. I'm sure you don't have a problem with drugs but with responsibility/integrity/loyalty? The person you are now is the person you will stay unless you choose to exercise self control, and I have no reason to think you will. But I'm bored as f\*\*\* so I'll give you another chance. I'm depressed as f\*\*\*, lonely as f\*\*\*, so I'll take what I can get.

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A lot of people tell me nice things, like I'm pretty, nice, funny. But only once in my life have I been complimented on confidence. Sure, I've got mediocely sized tits, and I'm tall and curvy. I'm friendly and sociable, but above all, I'm CONFIDENT in myself and my ability. We often hear about the 'haters', and while they judge us harshly and unfairly, based off of the clothes you wear, who you hang out with, and in lynbrook's case, your GPA (shoutout to my fellow Asians and Indians #asianinvasion), what a lot of people fail to realize is that they are their biggest judge and critic. You are only as good as you think you are. Personally, I love myself. Sure I have a 3.0 and am desperately in love with a guy that has no time for me, but I also know that I'm a great friend, daughter, and coworker. And believe me, I've gotten my fair share of hate and dislike... (Shoutout to that one guy in class that always calls me a slut and c\*nt behind my back!!!! <3) but I know who I am, and that's all that matters. And okay, this might seem like the lamest advice ever, but here I go... The haters are gonna hate, the players gonna play, heartbreakers homna break, fakers gonna

fake, but shaking it off and believing in yourself is the best thing you will ever do. Confidence is key.

*"Never look down on anybody unless you're helping them up."*

*-Jesse Jackson*

My skill of ignoring people's judgement has originated from when i was little. My brother used to always insult me and call me names so as i grew up i figured out that if i ignored him I wouldn't care as much. An added benefit was that he stopped bothering me because apparently he doesn't get the same enjoyment as the times when I did react. Now, anytime someone bothers me or judges me I just ignore them and prevent them from bothering me.

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I am being judged, just as I judge most people. Most people are always judging others. If you ever find someone who truly is not judgemental, you have found a needle in a haystack. The fact that I'm being judged use to make me really disappointed. I have passions that are particularly distinct (especially since I'm a male), such as tent stitching and tap dancing, and I use to be disappointed that people judge me as "the weird guy" because of my pastimes. But all of that changed one day. I was with a girl (who I'll get to later), and it struck me that other people's judgement is meaningless. I was on a walk at the park with the girl, and we heard birds chirping. I realized that a hummingbird chirps everyday. Some people like the sound and others don't, but the bird doesn't care. It's going to chirp anyway. Just as the bird doesn't care who likes or dislikes its chirping, I stopped caring what other people feel about me. I'm open to constructive criticism, and I'm definitely open to compliments, but I'm always going to do what makes me happy, nomatter what other people think. If more people stopped caring about their peers' judging them, the average amount of happiness per person in this world would probably at least double. What is special to me about that epiphany is the fact that I had it while I was with the love of my life. My life turned around in the positive direction while I was with her. This is simply proof to me that she is an angel sent to me from heaven. Thanks to her, I am no longer preoccupied by thoughts of other people's perceptions

of me and without her, I never would have found true happiness. Truly and deeply, I am in love with her. She is the peanut butter to my jelly, the track to my field, and the flowers to my garden. I will love her forever.

*"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."*

*-Oscar Wilde*

## Kathy White

### MFT

Kathy White is in private practice in San Jose where she provides counseling services to a variety of clients including teens and their families. For more information visit [www.kathywhitemft.com](http://www.kathywhitemft.com).

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## Additional Resources

The word “judgement” makes me cringe a bit. It seems to have such a negative connotation. My assumption is that we are all constantly judging. It’s the process of making a decision, or forming an opinion. One partial definition of judging is “forming an opinion, estimate, notion or conclusion, as from circumstances presented to the mind.” Well that doesn’t sound negative. I propose that a broader view of judgement could have the potential of broadening our minds and enhancing our relationships.

Judging is an essential part of making decisions – what answer is best on a test, deciding whether or not to ask someone out on a date, deciding on a college to attend and a major, deciding whether or not to follow a particular crowd, deciding whether or not to use alcohol or other controlled substances, deciding whether or not to follow a parents advice. And so much more.

Judging is also essential in what seems to be so much lesser concerns – deciding what to wear, deciding if I should take a different route to school or a job, deciding whether or not to add whipped cream to my Starbucks order, deciding to use pencil or pen (I know, so very old school).

Another definition of judging, “a misfortune regarded as inflicted by divine sentence, as for sin.” What? That’s an interesting definition that sounds like being sentenced to some sort of eternal punishment. Essentially hell. Or, if you prefer, use the analogy of a court of law and the judgement that is handed down to the accused. Note that for most court cases, judgement is final and essentially remains on the record forever.

I propose that judging others is essentially condemning them to a lesser place in our minds. It’s a place that the condemned may not be able to escape. Judgemental opinions of others can become engrained, and difficult to shake off. And yet, we all do it. But why?

Well, do you remember being told as a young child that when you point an accusatory finger at someone else, there are four fingers pointing back at you? Well, that’s actually one way that we judge others – we point fingers at others, point out their apparent faults. There is another term that might broaden our perspectives, it’s “projection.” Psychologically speaking, projection is when there is something in ourselves that we don’t really like and are not really aware of – but we can so easily point it out in someone else. It’s like a blind spot. Our judgements of others have more to do with us, than with them.

A quote from Pema Chodron:

“If we learn to open our hearts, anyone, including the people who drive us crazy, can be our teacher.”

## Please Understand Me

*By David Keirse and Marilyn Bates*

### Feeling Good

*By Viktor E. Frankl.*

### Man’s Search for Meaning

*By David D. Burns, M.D.*

### Reviving Ophelia

*By Mary Pipher, PhD*

### Real Love

*By Greg Baer. MD*