

## Thespians' 'Footloose' Rocks and Rolls Into Our Hearts



GET LOOSE AHS Thespians showcase their first full-out performance of *Footloose* at AHS' auditorium on Thursday night, April 3.

MOOR montage by SHANNON KHA

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On April 3, three months of hard work and dedication paid off for our Thespians Honors Society with the opening night of their spring production "Footloose." Working alongside many other dancers and musicians, they put on an admirable performance that showcased the wonderful vocal, musical and acting talents here at AHS.

Directed by Thespian adviser and drama teacher Jennifer Nitschke, the musical centers around the seemingly quiet town of Bomont where curfews are strict, dancing is illegal and the Bible is the authority. After recently moving from Chicago, determined protagonist Ren McCormick challenges the town's enforced law and reminds everyone that a little dancing goes a long way in inspiring freedom.

With such complex and emotional deliveries, the Thespians skillfully portrayed the play's realistic characters and engaged the audience in the storyline. Several major characters are highly memorable due to the passion of their actors. One notable performance included senior Anthony Amato as the male lead Ren McCormick. His intense fervor in both acting and singing truly captured the spectators' at-

ention. Alongside Amato, senior Carissa Herrera delivered a fantastic performance as Ariel Moore, Ren's love interest. With a dynamic voice, Herrera eloquently illustrated the inner conflicts and feelings Ariel faces in the play.

Ariel's father, Reverend Shaw Moore, acts as the musical's main antagonist. As the one who primarily supports Bomont's "no dancing" law, it would have been easy to portray him as just an one-dimensional villain. Instead, because of sophomore William Martinez's adept acting, the Reverend can be seen as sympathetic and multifaceted. Reverend's characterization allows the audience to understand that his actions are only meant to protect his daughter from harm. Instead of rooting for his downfall, we wish for him to understand and mend his relationship with Ariel. Their poignant familial issues is a touching secondary plot, keeping the audience emotionally invested in the play.

Supporting actors junior Brianna Sandoval and senior Tuan Tran truly delivered with strong stage presences. Sandoval's solid vocals and energetic acting as Rusty were prominent throughout the musical's scenes and dance numbers. Her spirited performance added liveliness to the play. Tran played Willard Hewitt, a simple-minded, rough but ultimately devoted friend of Ren's. He became a clear audience favorite due to his comedic sayings and quirky charm.

Furthermore, the play's numerous musical numbers were both stunning to listen to and visually appealing. Featuring many guest dancers, the choreography added emotion

to the scenes, whether it was excitement or apprehension. One notable number was "Somebody's Eyes," which created a fittingly tense mood, effectively using spotlights to shade dancers in the background. The ambience of the live instrumental music in the pit was another strong point. Directed by AHS' Visual and Performing Arts Director Mark Trulson, the music set up the scenes perfectly and immersed the audience into the actors' performances.

Despite the overall excellence of the musical, there were some details that can be improved on for future performances. One unfortunate issue that the Thespians could not be faulted for was the auditorium's old sound system that occasionally made it difficult to hear the actors' lines. Stage transitions were fluid and impressive for most of the play, but the few occasions in which they stalled were quite noticeable. In these times, the music helped to alleviate some of the boredom, but the audience would often become distracted after waiting patiently for an extended time.

Regardless, three months of constant rehearsals and hard work definitely showed during every second of the play. Watching the cast's beaming faces in the final musical number made it impossible not to admire the collaborative effort of everyone involved. They truly appeared to enjoy their performance and their enthusiasm spread to the audience. Planning, directing, staging and performing in a play is not easy, but the Thespians' riveting production of "Footloose" was clearly done with dedication and pride.

## Should ethnicity be considered as part of the admissions process for colleges?



CAROLINE REN  
Editor in Chief

### MOOR VS. MOOR

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Affirmative action, the active effort to improve opportunities for minority groups, has upset people for years, especially in education, but it is necessary to some extent. Racial privilege is easily forgotten when the clamor for solely merit-based college admissions arises, but it undeniably exists and pervades America.

No, this advantage does not exist because any one ethnicity is naturally more intelligent than another — it exists because of stereotypes, societal expectations, peer and teacher treatment of students and so on. As much as we might hate to admit it, our perception of others is subtly affected by their ethnicity, try as we might to eliminate any sort of bias. The underlying assumptions we make and the concepts about race society has driven into our minds are hard to forget, and these shifts in thinking create the aforementioned privilege through how much teachers pressure certain students to succeed, varying levels of acceptance of mediocrity and expectations of higher or lower performance.

Why, then, would we wish to engage in affirmative action when it perhaps further separates people based on race or ethnicity? Consideration of ethnicity in college admissions is crucial for this precise reason: the recognition of disparity. When college demographics are widely disproportionate, something is clearly wrong; the fact that an issue resides within society and entire groups of people rather than within individuals becomes apparent.

Though affirmative action laws are far from perfect and have aspects such as racial quotas that could very well be counterproductive, they are at least a step in the right direction in establishing greater equity.

Affirmative action was first established to solve the growing problem of economic inequality, which is reflected in college attendance. This means that ethnicity would be considered in the college admissions process to give minorities more opportunities for economic success. While this is an admirable goal, this policy is not the best solution to the problem.

It is true that minorities are underrepresented in colleges across the nation, but affirmative action may actually hurt its intended beneficiaries as well as those who are left out by this policy. Creating discrimination in an attempt to make up for past discrimination is terribly ironic, and giving someone a leg up at the expense of others just seems wrong. In addition, affirmative action may place students in schools that are not best suited for the student's needs. The focus should not be getting as many minority students into "elite" schools as possible, but rather getting students into the schools that will benefit them the most.

Affirmative action recognizes the disparity of college demographics, but there are other ways to ensure diversity without considering ethnicity in the admissions process. For example, the public universities in Texas policy of automatically enrolling students who graduated in the top 10 percent of their class fosters diversity due to the residential segregation that exists in America. No one should be alienated for fitting into a certain category, especially not regarding something as important to students' futures as college admissions.

MOOR graphics by SIMON ZHAO



### IN THE RICE BOX

#### To the Worrying Warriors

OLIVIA CHEUNG  
Editor in Chief

As the college admission decision season (thankfully) draws to a close, this long month has undoubtedly taken a toll on all those involved.

I've seen friends elated over decisions, while others were devastated by rejections and wait lists. I've seen friends proudly announce their decision over Facebook, while others quietly withdraw from social networking to survive the coming weeks.

Here's one to the seniors who wrongly feel insignificant.

I know it's easier said than done to feel better and move past this, and it's even harder not to question whether the past four years meant anything at all, but your life isn't over. College doesn't define you. *You* define college. From the many options you've considered, have you noticed the drastic changes in scenery and people, but not really the programs themselves? That's all a college is: a backdrop for your next few years. Whether you're located in sunny Southern California or in the ice age of Maine, you will be fine as long as you expose yourself to new knowledge and continue pursuing opportunities.

If a college can holistically look at everything you've presented them — four years of hard work and heartfelt essays that you've never felt safe sharing with even loved ones — and still say "nah," then shut off the computer. Burn the admissions letter. *Breathe.*

Realize that you're more than what an anonymous board thinks of you.