

# Californians' Drought Dilemma

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Copy Editor

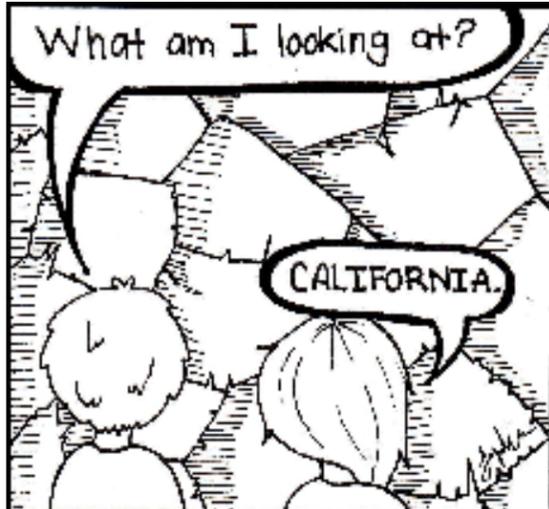
Using the sprinklers in daylight is not acceptable for the next few months. This past July, California implemented mandatory water conservation rules to combat the ongoing drought. These restrictions will stay in place for 270 days or less if repealed.

California's most recent drought period was from 2008 to 2011. When it first began, the "slight" dry spell was expected to end in 2010. However, that was not the case. The drought ended in 2011, a year later, when it shifted east towards Texas. California was declared in a drought again in 2012. According to Time Magazine, even when water conservation was encouraged in January 2014, Californians used more water in May 2014 than the past three year average for that month. Since voluntary water conservation produced no effect, restrictions became mandatory. The decision to "wait it out" for the 2008 drought produced slower results, so why were laws not implemented as soon as California was declared in a drought?

Droughts do not disappear by themselves, and with most of California naturally dry, it is susceptible to use more water for maintaining plant life, for consumption, and for aesthetic use. However, most of California does not look like the dry environment it is supposed to be. Californians expect the grass to be green, for produce to be top-notch, and for fountains to be running. All of these expectations require water that California doesn't have. Nevertheless, they continue to be met with outside water sources. The Colorado River, which starts in Wyoming and Colorado mountains, provides some of the water Southern California uses. Yet, even the Colorado River is facing a drought, according to the New York Times.

Many have become habituated to using large amounts of water when not necessary, mainly because Californians do

not see the drought in plain sight. Parks are still appealing with green grass. Trees and bushes still look well. However, the entire state of California is considered to be in a drought, with 80 percent of the state in the extreme level, according to Time Magazine. California's product prices help to tell a different story than what the public eye sees. In 2012 to 2013, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) cited California as the producer for most of the U.S.'s milk and indicated the increase of milk's price. Since cow feed takes water to produce, the rising cost can also be pointed to lower water availability.



With the drought affecting food sources that provide for all of the U.S., it is imperative to get out of the drought as fast as possible. With neighboring states running low on water as well, importing water to support California will be costly. Since some states rely on California for food, lower food production means higher food prices in those respective states. Also, with the drop in crop production, California's amount of exported produce will lower as well, resulting in lower income from international customers. Overall, the drought will negatively impact California's economic status.

The restrictions will bring improvement in California's water level. However, leaving the majority of the restrictions can provide a permanent solution to the recurring problem. It does not make sense to return to water-wasting habits, only to necessitate the implementation of restrictions again. Californians need to understand that not all water being used is from California, and should only be used when necessary or efficiently. To stop wasting water, even the most minute actions need to be considered, such as fixing water-wasting leaks in a timely matter. However, all of the laws prevent Californians from further aggravating the drought.

# Freedom to Speak, No Fear of Violence

SARA HERNANDEZ  
Staff Writer

Free things do not come around too often. Sometimes it is forgotten that there are things that are free according to the Constitution — for example, the freedom of religion and the freedom of speech. These things are not always thought of as given rights, and when they are actually exercised, authorities may become aggravated.

In Ferguson, Missouri, there have been many protests over the shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, by a white police officer. Among many citizens, this resulted in thoughts of injustice. These citizens have taken their questions to the street and have been received with unimaginable violence. The conduct of police officers in the city of Ferguson is deplorable. There is no excuse for the overwhelming presence of police vehicles and guns being pointed at innocent protesters during the first few days that the people of Ferguson were protesting.

Largely televised protests in the U.S. do not frequently happen, which is why it may seem terrifying to think of all the things that can go wrong during a protest of that magnitude. Understandably, the job of the police is to think of a way to control these unique situations. However, in the Ferguson protests, according to the New York Daily News, police fired stun guns, tear grenades and rubber bullets at the crowds. To many, these actions were uncalled for. The police took the hostile actions of a few and used that to allow themselves to terrorize others who were peacefully exercising their rights. There will always be those few people who take over peaceful events with violent actions, but this should not mean that people who simply want to protest what they believe in should have to encounter violent police forces.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN



## NO 'HO'LDING BACK

### Just Shake, Shake it Off

ELTON HO  
Copy Editor

Despite what my somewhat stoic and taciturn demeanor might suggest, I am deeply concerned with what others think of me. It sounds pathetic, but I thrive on acceptance and recognition in order to feel satisfied with myself. Conversely, the prospect of rejection and failure terrifies me. I know this preoccupation with pleasing everyone is unhealthy, but it is not so easy to eliminate it from my life.

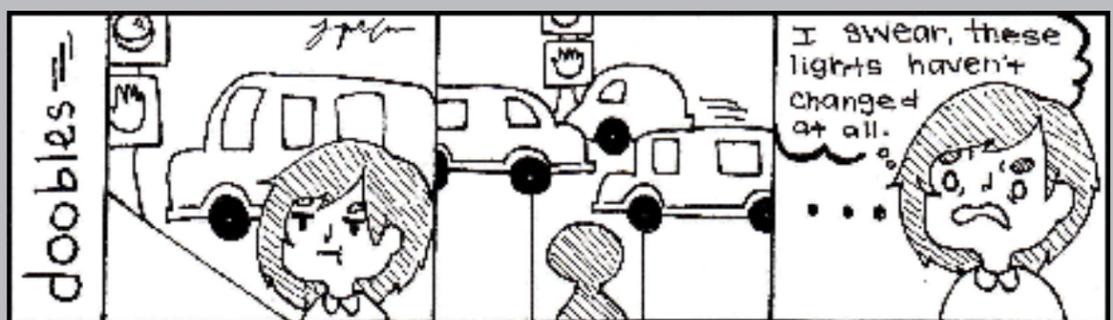
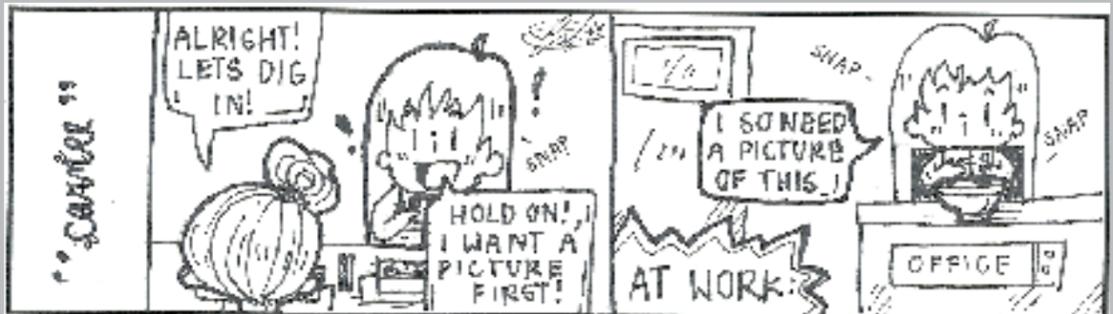
The fear of rejection has a way of seeping into every little aspect of my day. Because I regularly monitor and overthink everything I plan to say, I tend to be appallingly quiet in social situations, which is greatly frustrating. In conversation, I often offer nothing but a desperate smile as words become trapped inside my chest and refuse to come out.

However, I do endeavor to build up my self-confidence and independence, little by little. I can't keep acting like a mindless puppet, I tell myself; I can't let others determine my happiness. I joined the staff of The Moor newspaper partly so I could become more confident in my abilities to interact and communicate with others, as well as develop my writing skills, which is something I wanted to be proud of. The interviews with strangers, the emails to administrators, the red edits written all over my articles — they all terrified me at first, but I knew I had to face my fear.

This is also why I applied for this column: to prove to myself that I do deserve to be heard, that my voice does have some merit. And I do think that I am beginning to realize that.

When I feel that a person dislikes me, those familiar symptoms arise: my skin burns hot and my heartbeat reverberates throughout my body, but then I take back control. I remind myself of what is most important: how I feel about myself.

## CARTOONS



## LAUSD Abolishment of Law Triggers Parental Concern

SHELLEY LIN  
Staff Writer

Many parents are involved in their children's education so that their children receive the best opportunities to become successful. This year, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) suspended the parent trigger law, taking away parents' ability to petition. The parent trigger law gave parents the opportunity to help schools with an Academic Performance Index (API) below 800. Parents were able to petition for several options: converting the school into a charter, replacing

old staff, making budget decisions, dismissing the principal or even closing the school and relocating students to other schools; which is unnecessary. The school district had to comply with the petition if at least half of the school's parents signed it. Parents believe their voice has been unfairly taken away when LAUSD abolished it, but petition campaigning has done more harm than good.

Although the parent trigger law did help add more staff and activities to LAUSD schools, some requests required funding in order to be fulfilled. An agreement in West Athens School required \$300,000 to

hire more staff, playground aides and purchase school supplies. In reality, schools are limited by their budget.

Although parents could help make beneficial changes, their ability to initiate a great number of changes may cause more trouble. For example, teachers and parents may have trouble concurring with each other's ideas.

Now that LAUSD has joined with other California school districts to make their own adjustments, less spending and drama will occur. Parents should start trusting schools, as they cannot hold their child's hands throughout their whole life. MOOR graphic by LESLIE HWANG