



TEA TIME  
WITH TINA

### Childhood Disaster

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Opinions Editor

Growing up, I loved playing with my collection of Barbie dolls and Polly Pockets, but when I came across a clip of TLC's "Toddlers & Tiaras" on YouTube, I was immediately intrigued by how kids are taking dress-up to a whole new level. The hit reality show focuses on the contestants' road to competing in beauty pageants, which proves to be a ridiculously arduous task.

Children as young as two years old are caking on makeup like it's the end of the world, while older girls are getting their legs waxed as if they have hair growing there in the first place. These unnecessary "beautification" measures combined with forcing provocative evening gowns on just about any toddler can result in a lot of therapy when they become adults.

Though child beauty pageants claim to help increase confidence starting at a young age, these toddlers are actually having their self-esteem ripped into shreds as they are being judged only skin-deep and taught on superficial levels. Then who do we blame for such indecency, if not the blissfully ignorant minds of these two year olds? The parents. Yes, the "loving" parents whose greatest aspirations for their future beauty queen child include dieting and getting Botox injections, because apparently there are wrinkles on an eight-year-old's face. However, what befuddles me the most is their ability to squander \$2,000 on a skimpy Burlesque-inspired outfit, but complain about their inability to pay for their bills.

All this is deemed worth it for the ultimate prize: a short-lived fame on the competition stage. At least we can predict that the psychiatric therapy field will be a booming industry after years of exploitation.

## Immoral Cuts from Food Stamp Program May Be Imminent

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Staff Writer

House Representatives, mainly Republicans, recently approved a \$40 billion cut in the government food stamp program. However, if the cuts are implemented, they can withdraw much needed monetary support from thousands of families.

The purpose of the Republican plan is to reduce citizens' economic dependence on the government. Yet, a general cut from the budget does not counter the problem effectively. Some beneficiaries of the program do blatantly misuse the program. A prime example would be Jason Greenslate, an able-bodied, unemployed surfer who buys lobster and

sushi with the food stamps instead of necessary groceries. However, abusers of the program make up a minimal portion of the whole group. A general cut

from the budget will not do much in eliminating misusers from the program since on a monetary standpoint, they are in the same circumstances as those who need support. Cutting money from the budget means indiscriminately taking off those who do need the program. Multiple Democrats argue that seniors, active duty military families and

children are at risk of losing support if the cut is implemented. Citizens that need the most monetary support should not be denied help

if they truly need the aid. The logic behind cutting money from food stamps is not sound. Why cut from a program that helps keep multiple families and individuals fed adequately? There was a significant increase of food stamp users after the recession and the economy

still has not fully recovered. Many are out of jobs and need monetary support to keep themselves and their families nourished. Cutting \$40 billion from the budget per decade levels out to nearly four billion per year - five percent of the \$75.7 billion food stamp budget.

According to Democracy, the average amount of money in an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card is \$275 per month. Cuts will result in more than two hundred thousand applicants not receiving monetary support, or a significant decrease in the money distributed per beneficiary.

Instead of taking away money from programs that benefit citizens, unnecessary spending should be limited.

Multiple branches of government have been detected spending government money on activities that do not benefit citizens and losing thousands or even millions of dollars in overpaying certain institutions and being subject to fraud. The US Secret Service spent \$23 million to purchase luxury parade limousines. Would it be sensible for a parent to take away lunch money from their child yet spend money on a luxury car?

So far, only the House of Representatives has approved the bill. The Senate, and possibly the President, will further consider the bill. The Senate should further consider SNAP participants who will be placed at a disadvantage with the large cut.



### Greek Yogurt: Whey Bad For the Environment

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Staff Writer



As the two billion dollar industry for Greek yogurt continues to grow, people remain unaware of the detriments caused to the environment by a byproduct from milk products called whey.

The production of Greek yogurt creates acid whey that is toxic and can harm the environment if leaked or mishandled. With the growing trend of Greek yogurt for its health benefits, dairy facilities should have stricter regulations in terms of the size of the companies and the amount of yogurt they distribute;

most only have regulations to prevent discarding into lakes or other protected areas.

Chobani, one of the biggest Greek yogurt distributors, uses three pounds of milk to make about one pound of yogurt and each cup of yogurt makes two pounds of acid whey. Unlike sweet whey, which comes from cheese products, the use of acid whey is becoming a growing health and environmental hazard.

When acid whey is poured into a large body of water, which is illegal in the U.S., the whey depletes oxygen levels of the water, killing many living organisms. In 2008, the Minerva

cheese factory paid a fine of over \$6,000 after accidentally releasing the toxic waste into Sandy Creek, Ohio, which killed over 5,400 fish.

With such a risk to harming the environment, companies like Chobani strive to remove the toxic whey, paying farmers to take it off their hands to feed animals; however, unlike sweet whey, the chemicals in acid whey can actually harm the animals that consume whey when used as feed or fertilizer.

Companies and scientists strive to find a better solution for the disposal of the acid whey; however, the reduction of consuming Greek yogurt would benefit the environment.

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### SHOULD SPORTS OR THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS RECEIVE MORE FUNDING?



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BRIANA THAI  
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The Alhambra Unified School District is considering spending money on both visual and performing arts (VAPA) and sports programs. However, more of the funding should go to VAPA programs.

There are a wide variety of occupations for VAPA, including directing, animation, design, photography, acting and many other careers. However, in sports, there are only the typical sports to choose from, and the chances of playing professionally is very slim.

According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association, less than one percent of high school students end up playing professionally; for example, only 0.03 percent of high school students have the chance of playing professionally for basketball.

Companies and scientists strive to find a better solution for the disposal of the acid whey; however, the reduction of consuming Greek yogurt would benefit the environment.

Nowadays, the employers want to hire workers who possess a wide range of skills. For instance, VAPA enhances a student's creativity by creating flexible thinking skills, which can be very beneficial in the near future when searching for future employment. A 2005 study in Stanford shows that musical training improves how the brain processes how our words are spoken. So if the district cares about our future success, more funding should go towards VAPA.

Sports are essential to many high schoolers due to the important life lessons it teaches, like teamwork and the value of hard work. However, we have limited amount of equipment, which may discourage students from joining a team and can be unsafe.

7.6 million high schoolers played sports during the 2010-2011 school year, an increase of almost 40,000 students compared to the 2009-2010 school year. If these rates stay constant and more athletes become involved in sports, AHS is going to need a lot more equipment.

One piece of equipment AHS needs is a pool, which is essential to our water polo and swim teams. Currently, team members have to travel to Granada Park just for practice. Although more expensive, maintaining a pool on campus may enable more people to join swim and water polo.

Another piece of equipment AHS really needs is a new track. Other schools' track and cross country teams run on nice rubber tracks, while our runners have to settle for kicking up dirt into their eyes, which is both irritating and unsafe.

If the district cares about our school sports' success, more of the funds should be given to sports and athletes of AHS.