

## Student Opinion



### What is your favorite part of Christmas?

"I always have really liked all the decorations."

-Sophomore  
Ella Johnson

"I like spending time with my family."

-Senior Colton Ortiz  
"Getting together with friends and family and eating food."

-Freshman  
Jovi Vanderbeek

"Getting together with all my family and getting to spend more time with them."

-Junior Reagan Arkema

"Going on vacation with my family."

-Sophomore  
Mason Wittmer

"Decorating always put me in the mood for Christmas."

-Junior Cody Kime

"I really love the songs during this time of the year and spending time with friends and family."

-Freshman  
Tori Van Vark

"My favorite part is the snow."

-Senior  
Trystan Vanstryland

"Getting together as a family and just having a great time celebrating the birth of Jesus."

-Sophomore  
Josh Warner

"Going on break and all of the Joy."

-Junior Jackson Goodyk

"Waking up Christmas morning and seeing my little sister's face when she sees the tree."

-Senior Chris Pyle



## Little Talks

With  
Lily

As I approach the halfway point of my junior year, I find myself realizing something alarming. No, not that I am totally in over my head as far as classes go; I knew that from day one of junior year. The alarming thing that I've begun to realize is that it has become socially acceptable for people to ask me what exactly I plan on doing with my life.

The first time I was asked this question was the fall of my freshman year. My family and I were staying with our great uncle, whom we did not know very well. One morning, as I sat at the breakfast table, he sat himself down next to me. He folded his hands atop the table, looked me in the eyes, and said, "So Lily, what are you thinking about for the future?" I was extremely

caught off guard. The future?

"I, uh, what do you mean?" I asked.

"You know. Life after high school," he responded. I gulped. The truth was, I had absolutely no idea.

"Engineer!" I said, not because I wanted to be one, but because it was the first respectable career that occurred to me. The uncle nodded, and I breathed a sigh of relief.

Probably one of the most distressing things about high school is that people expect you to know what you're doing. Acquaintances, teachers, friends of my parents- all of them expect me to have an acceptable future plan ready for review at a moment's notice. I could always just be honest and admit that I have only the vaguest

notion of what life after High School will look like for me. However, I fear that others perceive that as not caring.

Adults will, most likely, never stop asking that dreaded question. Perhaps its good that they do ask it because I am a person who is bad at making decisions and sometimes needs to be pressured. Still, it is uncomfortable. It stinks that you are supposed to have everything decided by the end of junior year- before you can vote, have a credit card- before you're even technically an adult. I would appreciate it if the adults in my life allowed me to enjoy the last year of my childhood before the crushing weight of debt and personal responsibility is firmly upon my shoulders.



## Breakfast

With Tiffany Van Gilst

Around the holidays' people usually see their extended family members. During this time you see a lot of stories about what those family members say to one another. Most of them start with these dreaded questions. "What do you want to do with your life?" "Why are you still single?" Even though this topic doesn't come up as often, I believe the most awkward conversation to have is talking about someone's weight. In my personal experience, I've been called too thin at family gatherings, work, school, car dealerships... Please just stop commenting on people's bodies. Thanks.

First of all, I want to get the message across that you shouldn't body shame anyone, no matter what their size. My goal is not to make anyone feel bad about

themselves here. When you feel the need to tell people how to dress because of what they look like or you envy their size, zip it! Everyone has the body they have for a reason.

I just heard a great story about these older women in Africa who were protesting freedom for their country. They would strip down to nothing and would walk the streets and protest. These women were held with high regard because their bodies showed what they have been through as they aged and no one judged them for what they looked like. Why can't we do that here?

The body positivity movement started in the 90s with the goal of making people fall in love with themselves again. We lived in a world where models were size 00 and

pasty white. Today we have plus size models and models of all different skin colors. And, contrary to popular belief, the body positivity movement isn't for bigger women. It is open to everyone who wants to celebrate their looks and embrace who they are. It is about confidence in yourself and spreading it to others.

The message I'm trying to get across is if you feel the need to comment on someone's weight this holiday season, or any season really, don't. Everyone has their own story and their body is theirs to choose what to do with it. You can still have a great holiday season without having demeaning conversations.

## Staff Ed: Greed

kindergarten teachers address when they teach you about sharing or not budging in the lunch line. Kids have to be taught why they shouldn't be greedy because, well, they're kids, and they don't know any better. Growing up, though, and having internalized those lessons, that same greedy instinct remains, albeit in a more ambivalent light. Major shopping dates like Black Friday capitalize on this primal, impulsive urge to have and to consume. It's like the first time you saw that shiny new toy in the store that you just had to have, except this time, it's you with the money, not your parents.

After moving out of the house, the responsibilities of adulthood are so jarringly thrust upon you. Now it's you who has to pay the bills, and it's you who has to budget all the money you earn. In this process, although it might seem obvious, you realize that money, truly, does not grow on trees, and while, as a child, you ignored all those price tags at Walmart, now, each one stands threateningly in your face, daring you to spend just a little more than you can afford. It might seem pretty sensible, then, to hunt

and bargain for low prices, and it is, but the anxiety that comes from it is great fuel for greed- because what's mine, however little that may be, is *mine*. Even if you're in a fairly comfortable financial situation, this same sense of greedy urgency persists, and for many people, it culminates during the holiday season.

Now suddenly, you're aware of the sheer magnitude of everything you wish you had, and you usually know exactly why you want it. On the flip side, you become aware of advertising campaigns, of social engineering, and, above all, of *money*. That wonder you once had about the holiday season is now transparently cold and calculated, and the mystery of Santa and his elves, that you were enveloped in as a kid, is now reflected hollowly back at you through countless marketing strategies. The holiday season brings out the greed in both ourselves and in others, and as we get older, this starts to become clearer and clearer.

•The Pelladium Staff unanimously voted in favor of this editorial.