

WHY ARGUMENTS AGAINST GUN CONTROL ARE FLAWED

Five arguments we should immediately stop using in this important discussion

In the wake of the horrific shooting at Marysville Pilchuck High School, many took to social media to share opinions regarding gun control and school shootings. While it's easy to regurgitate ubiquitous fallacies about gun control, doing so doesn't solve anything. Here are five arguments against gun control that we should stop using immediately and instead focus on real solutions.

"Gun control violates my Second Amendment rights."

Well, not quite. The Second Amendment states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Yes, this protects our right to keep and bear arms, but it also calls for reasonable limitations – or regulation – of this right. Many gun rights activists regard any limitation as a constitutional violation. But just like any other right, we place limits on our rights to better society as a whole.

For example, the First Amendment protects our right to free speech, assembly, press, religion and to petition the government. However, the First Amendment does not grant citizens the right to make verbal threats or spread lies to intentionally damage someone's reputation. Each of our rights come with reasonable limitations that the courts, Congress, state lawmakers and we citizens have deemed necessary to preserve and further our way of life. The right to own and possess a firearm should not take precedent over an individual's right to be safe from gun violence.

"The issue isn't guns. It's mental health."

There is no doubt that our nation has a terribly flawed and underfunded mental health system. During the past few decades, particularly under the Reagan administration, federal funding for mental health was slashed. Our government is not meeting its duty to sufficiently protect and provide essential services for the mentally ill.

However, the solution to ending gun violence is not purely a mental health issue. The solution must be a combination of putting tougher restrictions on access to firearms and better treatment for the mentally ill. When those who are mentally ill gain access to firearms, catastrophic events can occur.

Additionally, gun violence is not always caused by those who suffer mental illness. An average of 3 percent of all gun deaths are the result of accidents, for example. While the conversation about improving our nation's mental health system is an important one, it is not the only one we need to have. A solution to ending gun violence must include safety measures to assure that guns are handled and stored responsibly by those who are fit to do so.

"More people die in automobile accidents than die from guns, but we don't ban cars, do we?"

This one never goes away despite the fact that it's pathetically illogical. First of all, the premise of this argument is severely flawed. Nobody is suggesting an outright ban on firearms. Still, a 2011 report from the Violence Policy Center showed that gun deaths outnumbered motor vehicle deaths in the state of Washington. But even in states where gun deaths don't outnumber motor vehicle deaths, this argument is still absurd. Yes, motor vehicle deaths are a serious problem. As a people, we have taken significant steps to promote driver safety as well as improve safety features in our cars and in our roads. For example, we require car insurance. We must pass tests to obtain a license, and must register personal and vehicle information with law enforcement agencies. We have speed limits and other rules on our roads. We have strict penalties for violators of these laws, and licenses can be quickly revoked or suspended. But, we cannot seem to find the courage to take similar measures with guns.

Gun activists say that driving is a privilege and not a constitutional right. Are we really incapable of understanding that reasonable limitations to the Second Amendment would provide a safer society for all Americans? Voters in Washington will soon vote on Initiatives 591 and 594. Unfortunately, I-591 would bar the state legislature from taking any action on reasonable gun control measures. However, I-594 would close a loophole that currently allows gun sales between private parties, via the Internet and at gun shows to occur without any background check. Common sense background checks look at a person's record for criminal activity and mental health alerts. Why would anyone want guns to get into the hands of convicted criminals or anyone mentally ill? I-594 is a step in the right direction, while I-591 is an insult to victims of gun violence.

"Criminals will always get guns, so there's no point to gun control."

In the historical ranking of complete cop-outs, this may top the list. This argument is frequently used to suggest that any attempt to regulate guns will be futile. This simply is not true. A study from the Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health compared the states' strength of gun control laws to the rates of gun-related homicides and suicides. What did they find? States with stricter gun control laws had lower gun-related homicide and suicide rates. The study strongly suggested that reasonable gun control measures work.

The idea of doing nothing to solve gun violence is absurd. Yes, we'll probably always have people who speed while driving, but that doesn't mean we should get rid of speed limits. If people do not follow gun laws, they should be punished to the full extent of the law. We cannot sit idly by while gun violence continues to plague our nation. But that's exactly what lawmakers have done.

After the December 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary massacre where a gunman killed 28 students and school staff, a bill was brought to the floor of the Senate. The proposed Manchin-Toomey Amendment would have required background checks on most private gun sales. It was co-sponsored by a Republican and a Democrat. And yet, the Senate shamefully voted it down. The amendment needed just six more votes to pass, but because many of our elected officials do not have the political courage to do what is in the best interest of their constituents, the amendment failed. It was an absolute disgrace. Congress may be sitting idly by, but we cannot afford to.

"Guns don't kill people, people kill people."

Ah, yes. Our favorite. And by favorite, we mean the most ignorant defense out there. Yes, it's true that a human being is usually needed to pull a gun's trigger, but a person can do far more damage in a much shorter amount of time using a gun than a knife or some other potential weapon. Take the gun out of the incidents at Marysville Pilchuck or Seattle Pacific University or Sandy Hook Elementary, and there very well may have been serious injuries, but probably not immediate, violent deaths.

We need to stop excusing the role guns play in these serious acts of violence. Guns only increase the magnitude of havoc and terror. While this clichéd phrase may be fun to say superficially, it does nothing to solve the issue at hand. We need to stop using it if we're serious about preventing gun violence. 🗣️

How'd we do? What do you think about gun control? Are you for it? Against it? Let us know. Write a letter to the editor and email it to editor@thehawkeye.org or bring it in to Room 130.



HAWKEYE STAFF EDITORIAL

TAKE THE LEAD ON ENDING GUN VIOLENCE NOW

An open letter to Washington's
elected officials and political leaders

Dear Sen. Murray, Sen. Cantwell, Rep. DelBene, Rep. Larsen, Rep. Herrera-Beutler, Rep. Hastings, Rep. McMorris-Rogers, Rep. Kilmer, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Reichert, Rep. Smith, Rep. Heck, Gov. Inslee, Sen. McAuliffe, Rep. Moscoso and Rep. Stanford: We are calling on you, our elected political leaders, to take the lead on passing common sense gun measures to make our state and country safer.

Now is the time to take action to end gun violence. The recent tragedy at Marysville Pilchuck High School is the third school shooting in Washington this year. In May, a man was shot on the basketball court at Horizon Elementary School in Everett. In June, one student was killed and two others were wounded when a gunman opened fire at Seattle Pacific University (SPU). And now, three are dead and three more are injured after the tragic shooting at Marysville Pilchuck H.S.

So, we are pleading with you to take action on this issue. We are asking that you ignore special interest groups, such as the National Rifle Association, and listen to those impacted by these tragedies and the vast majority of your constituents.

As public school students, we are constantly reminded of the horrific impact of gun violence. We've seen the impact that these events have had here at schools. Our colleagues and friends have seen gun violence at schools first-hand. Graduates from MTHS were witnesses to the tragic shooting at SPU on June 5.

We're the ones who are required to go to school everyday, vulnerable to those who wish to do us harm. We're the ones who have to do the lockdown drills and wonder in the back of our minds if we're the next victims. This problem is serious and personal to each of us.

However, we do not see our elected officials pushing hard enough for solutions to the problem of gun violence.

We need to you to act.

We cannot continue to wait.

Our lives depend on it.

It should have been apparent after the Columbine, Virginia Tech, Northern Illinois University, Oikos University, Sandy Hook Elementary, University of California Santa Barbara and many more shootings that we need you to act.

Yet, it's almost 2015 and there has been virtually no action on the part of Congress or our state legislature with regard to solving this crisis. Do you realize that there have been 87 school shootings since that horrible day at Sandy Hook Elementary?

It's not enough to tweet that your "thoughts and prayers go out" to those affected by these tragedies. We are tired of having to hear that rapid line followed by nothing but inaction.

Don't let these innocent victims suffer or die in vain.

Do your jobs and come up with solutions to prevent more tragedies from occurring. Taking steps to solve this issue is what will truly honor the victims of these heinous crimes.

It sounds like you've all been doing a lot of thinking and a lot of praying. Now it's time for acting.

Respectfully,

The HAWKEYE Editorial Board

IT'S TIME TO RECOGNIZE OTHER RELIGIONS IN AMERICA

In the United States, Christianity is the most popular religion by far. With 78.4 percent of Americans being Christian, it is the leading religion in our country.



Clohey Horton
HAWKEYE STAFF

I find this astounding. There are hundreds of other religions and yet Christianity is practiced by over half of our country.

Why is that?

Advertising.

Commercials, websites and billboards are used

for advertising the Christian faith. Youth groups use camps and fun activities to bring teenagers in. These youth groups are wonderful places that can offer the teenager opportunities. Other times the teens just go for the fun games or camps.

In some cases they read the Bible and claim that they are Christian, but then don't abide by the guidelines of Christianity.

I understand that we are all human and we all make mistakes, but once you've broken the rules the god you believe in has set for you, you can't call yourself a devout Christian.

I grew up in a small town. This town had public schools like any other, and I attended one from first to third grade. After seeing some behavior my mom didn't approve of she, wanted to put me in a private school. The only one in the town was Queen of Angels private Catholic school.

However, we didn't have the money to attend it, so I was sponsored and supported by the church. All we had to do was attend church every Sunday and take on a portion of the payment and I could go to the school.

Eventually, the priest told us we needed to fill out a donation envelope every Sunday, because otherwise he wouldn't know if we actually attended or not.

At the time I was attending the school I was getting old enough to start questioning the things they taught us. Why doesn't god approve of gay people if he supposedly made all of us? Was the Bible written by god or by his disciples?

Yes, I know he went through telling them what to write in spirit, but I couldn't believe it.

My young mind was greatly confused. I was scared

to believe anything besides what I was taught. If god really did exist then I would go to hell, and I didn't want that.

So, even though I didn't like it, I kept practicing Catholicism and then Christianity in fear of believing otherwise.

Years later, after going through an extremely difficult time in my life I started researching Buddhism. It gave me a new perspective on how to think of things and it helped me get out of the black hole I felt was swallowing me.

It gave me freedom; I didn't have rules that I didn't agree with and had to follow like I did with Christianity. I loved the fact that Buddhism helped me to better myself and still does to this day. I am not Buddhist per say, but I do participate in Buddhist practices.

"Believe nothing. No matter where you read it, or who said it. No matter if I have said it. Unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense." – Buddha

I'm not here to try and convert you to Buddhism or to turn you against the Christian faith.

I'm here to let you know you have options.

Just because your family or friends are Christian doesn't mean you can't find something that truly fits you as a guiding hand. Maybe you could find something that truly fits you and is a guiding hand rather than a book of

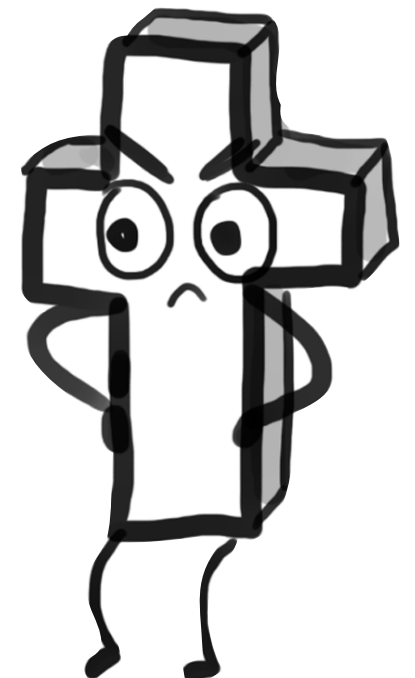
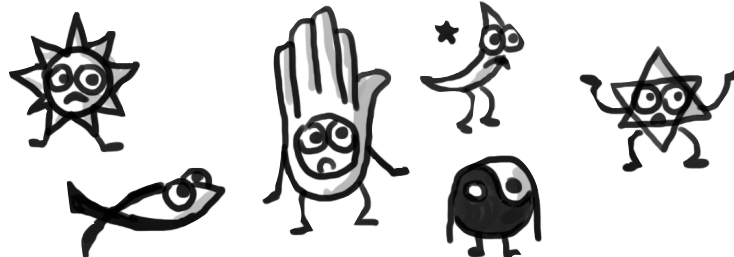
guidelines.

If you want to find your true worth and quality then maybe Baha'i is the religion for you.

If you're strongly against violence then maybe Jainism is more for you.

You'll never know until you branch out and try.

"Just because your family or friends are Christian doesn't mean you can't find something that truly fits you as a guiding hand."



STOP BLAMING VIOLENT ACTS ON VIDEO GAMES

Research shows violent video games don't make people act violently

Guns, blood, gore, fighting and profanity are what you will see in many of the video games of today.

Due to this, a debate has been sparked on whether these

video games, with their violent nature and explicit debauchery, directly affect the user in a violent manner.

In the wake of many shootings and everyday acts of violence, this debate is very relevant.

Games like "Mortal Kombat"

and "Grand Theft Auto" display acts of extreme violence and circumstances where people are shooting and evading the police or fighting in a rather gruesome manner.

All this means that people have a right and reason to be scared and look for the causes of these violent acts.

Since you see people doing seemingly exactly what characters in video games are doing and violence is ubiquitous, many would argue that these games are the reason for such behavior.

Doesn't it make sense? It's a very interesting argument and it deserves looking into.

Now although things like shootings and violence are very prevalent today, we must ask, does that mean video games are necessarily the reason for all of that? Wouldn't we see people every day trying to specifically copy what they see in these video games?

Millions of people play these games, yet compared to the millions of video game players, only a handful commit acts like mass shootings.

There will always be outliers. Many people try to mimic and copy what they see on TV, whether it's a game or a celebrity.

Also, wouldn't research back up the claims that video games correlate to violence?

Yet, on psychcentral.com they reported a study saying, "The study published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence, researchers found that the playing of video games actually had a very slight calming effect on youths."

In a study called "Violent Video Games and Real-World Violence: Rhetoric Versus Data," conducted by research scientists at Rutgers and Villanova Universities, it was found that violent video games actually don't lead to increases in violent behavior.

Professor Markey, who was a researcher on the study, later

said, "The biggest 'take home' of this study is that violent video games were not related to increases in violent crime – not even a little"

Although it is clear that through recent studies that violent video games don't correlate to violent behavior, people still argue to the contrary.

In turn, many want these games banned or put on high restriction because of their promotion of violence.

This is alarming because it shows how people base much of their claims off of ignorance and emotion rather than actual facts. In turn, video games are unjustly used as scapegoats for violent behavior.

What about other media? Why aren't violent TV shows and movies getting the same scrutiny as video games?

Markey said, "There is no evidence that, even in the laboratory, violent video games have a different effect on mundane acts of aggression than other forms of violent media"

To ban or restrict these games off of unfounded and unsubstantiated claims is dangerous because it shows us as a society basing emotion over fact.


When we look at something like a violent video game and automatically assume it must be the catalyst for violent behavior, without looking at other aspects of the individual or society itself, we are basing something off of what it looks like rather than looking at the facts; this is both sad and frightening.

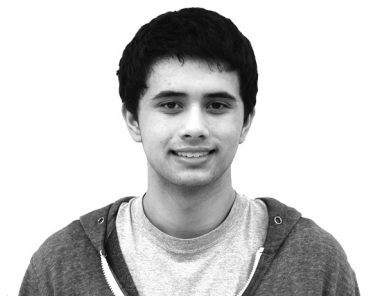
Here at MTHS, a non-scientific survey was taken in early October during PASS period and not one out of the 45 people surveyed reported that they felt angry, mad, or violent after playing a violent video game, and no one believed that violent video games absolutely cause people to become more violent.

Now, a resolution to this debate would be for people to instead have the mentality of looking at the things around an individual that may influence them to do violent things. This would be mental health, family problems, the neighborhood or area they live in instead of looking at something like a video game and assume it is the reason for their violent behavior. Because looking at a violent video game and a violent individual and assuming that the game must be the reason for their behavior is ignorant.

As Professor Markey again said, "Finding that a young man who committed a violent crime also played a popular video game, such as 'Call of Duty,' 'Halo' or 'Grand Theft Auto' is as pointless as pointing out that the criminal also wore socks."

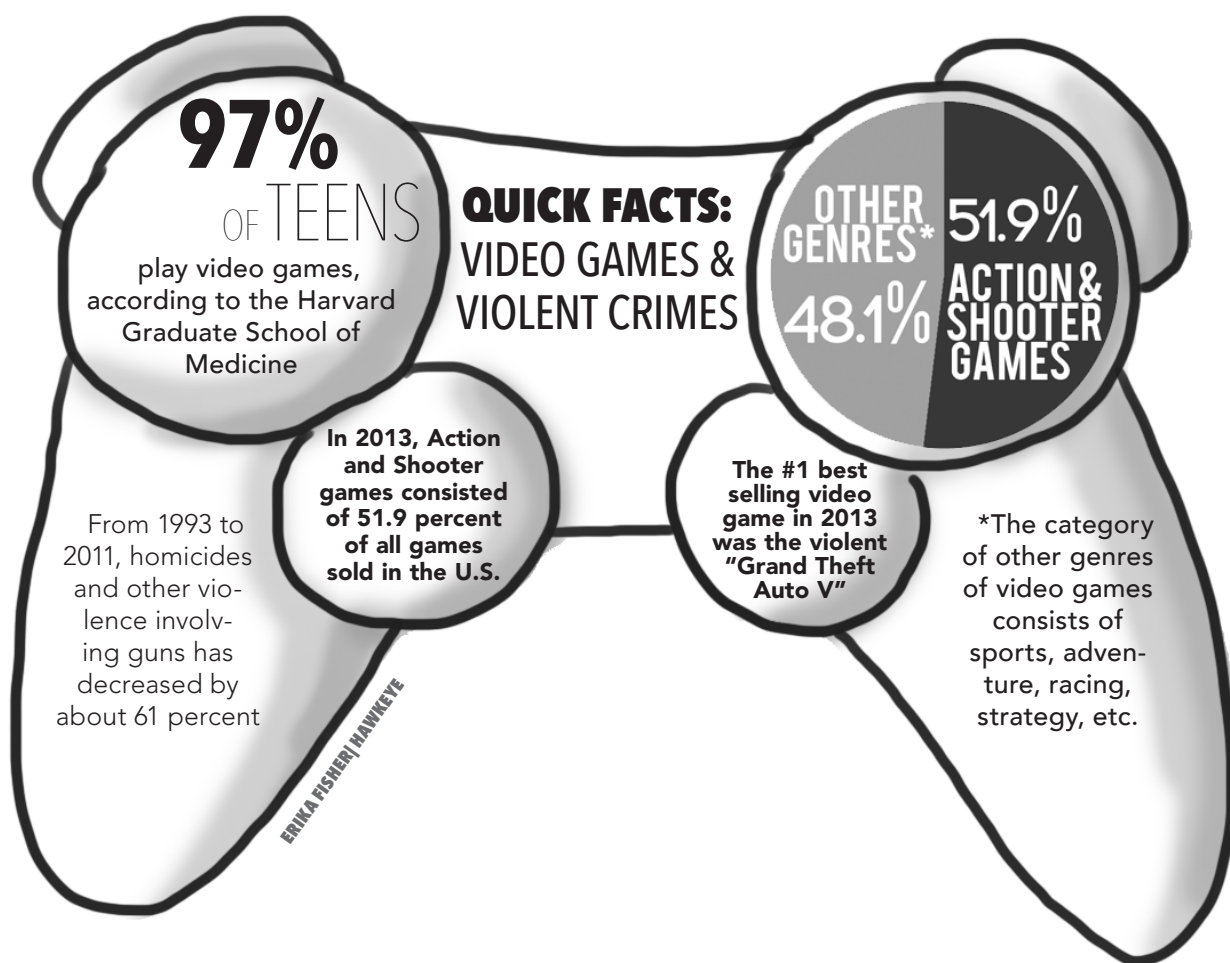
So, this suggests that to say violent video games cause and contribute to violent behavior is an uninformed and uncorroborated opinion.

People need to stop blaming fictional games and start looking at the other factors of a person's behavior. 



Ian Moffett
HAWKEYE STAFF

"Many want these games banned or put on high restriction because of their promotion of violence. This is alarming because it shows how people base much of their claims off of ignorance and emotion rather than actual facts. In turn, video games are unjustly used as scapegoats for violent behavior."



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE?

When I was in grade school, I wanted to be a fireman. When I was in middle school, I took this personality



Greg Schwab
PRINCIPAL

inventory and my score suggested that I should be a park ranger. When I went to college at

the University of Oregon, I changed my major about four times, eventually getting my Bachelor's Degree in English.

After what could only be described as a VERY brief career in the NFL (my friend described it as having a cup of coffee with the San Diego Chargers), I found my way into the classroom as an English teacher.

From there I became an athletic director, assistant principal and principal. And I thought I was going to be a fireman...

This edition of the HAWKEYE features stories about alums who have gone on to do great things after high school. I share this with you to get you thinking now about what your plans are after high school.

One of the most important decisions you will make in these next few years is what to do after high school. I'm sure that the answer to this question for many of you is go to college. Going to a four year or two year college after high school is a good plan and one that I endorse for anyone who asks. In fact, my goal for every

student in our school is that you have the option to go to college when you graduate. But notice that I said "option."

I recognize that my path from high school may not be the one that is right for everyone else. What's important to me is that you have the option to go. More important to me, however, is that you have some kind of plan for your post-high school years.

What are those plans? What is there besides college? That is what we hope to help you figure out in these next few years. There are many choices for you in the years after high school—work, trade school, military, volunteer experiences, and college programs. Your job in these next few years is to make sure you know what those programs are and that you find yourself headed in the direction that you want to go.

"Finding that path after high school that gets you prepared for a career is critical."

Can you go to work right out of high school? I'm pretty sure you can. Can you find yourself in a career right out of high school? Most likely not.

Finding that path after high school that gets you prepared for a career is critical. What can you do now to help make this happen? Talk to your counselor. Talk to teachers. Talk to your parents. A lot of adults have done this already and have some pretty good tips on how to navigate the years after high school. But whatever you do, start planning now. One day, we'll be featuring you in an edition of the HAWKEYE! 📢

NOTE: The HAWKEYE provides the MTHS Administration space each issue in the Op/Ed section as part of our mission as a designated open public forum.

A HAPPY HOMECOMING FOR HAWKS

Homecoming week came and went in a flash. Some may be sad that it's over while others are relieved. Overall it was a positive



Alisha Clingan
ASB PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

and enjoyable experience for everyone.

From ASB's standpoint we thought it went really well as far as the coronation ceremony, assembly, and

dance. After homecoming, ASB had an evaluation. Overall we thought there was a lot of really good things to be proud but there were also some things that we thought could've gone better and that we need to work on.

To gain a better perspective we went around and asked individual students about their thoughts, opinions, and overall experience.

To start off homecoming week we had the coordination ceremony. The ceremony was very nice; there were elegant decorations courtesy of Mrs. Castleton and the orchestra played beautiful music. Junior homecoming prince Bryson Bruno said, "It went pretty smoothly, the handshakes and questions were funny. Although, I wish there was a bigger turnout of people that came and supported."

Later in the week, on Friday, was the homecoming assembly which was very exciting. We got a lot of very good feedback from students as well as administration, teachers and parents. Senior Collin Rhodes said, "The assembly went really well, the band did a really good job of pumping everyone and the games were entertaining." Later on Friday was the football game where the Hawks ruined the royals. It was

really cool to see all the students and alumni coming together to cheer on the Hawks.

To end the week with a boom we had the homecoming dance on Saturday. Freshmen Nina and Ryan Berry said, "The dance was really fun, the music could've been a little bit better. Although it was a lot better than expected." Selling over 600 tickets, we had half of our school at the dance which was amazing. It was so great to see everyone all dressed up and having a good time.

Throughout the week we had spirit days; Monday was 'Merica Monday where you dress up patriotically. Then, Tuesday was #TransformationTuesday where you either transformed yourself into the past or the future. Next, Wednesday was Cartoon Day where you dressed up as your favorite cartoon character. After that, Thursday was Class Theme Day where the freshmen dressed up as Alice in Wonderland, the sophomores were Neverland, the juniors were the Wizard of Oz, and the seniors were Willy Wonka.

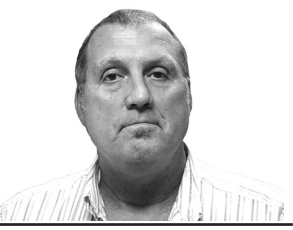
Lastly, Friday was Class Colors Day with freshmen wearing gray, sophomores white, juniors black and seniors red. It was fun to see the student body get spirited and dress up. The amount of people who dressed up was a little disappointing, so for next year we will work on making the days easier to dress up for, yet still creative.

Overall Homecoming 2014 was a success. It never gets old to see not only the student body come together, but the whole community. Senior Danny Roth's thoughts on homecoming were, "It was pretty cool, like cooler than the other side of the pillow." Thank you for making this year's homecoming incredible. 📢

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CURRENT HOMECOMING TRADITIONS MAKE TERRACE SAFER AND MORE INCLUSIVE

In the summer of 1995 I made one of the best decisions in my life (I know you all weren't even born yet) – I accepted the job of the Activities/Athletic Director at MTHS.



Kim "Stew" Stewart
ATHLETICS DIRECTOR/ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

I went from teaching five full-time health classes, to a world you can't describe in a short article.

As I sat at the Homecoming dance last month (the 10th time I've spent my anniversary at the dance), I started thinking back and writing some stuff down for fun.

Homecoming was a five-week process. We used to take up three full classes for nominations, primary elections and final voting. We had a speeches assembly, the Coronation Assembly was during the day and the Homecoming Assembly lasted more than two hours.

And hazing, at the time, was a major part, tradition and

accepted practice. You can call it what you want, but that always seemed to be the dark cloud that hung over the last day of Homecoming. We walked around pretending we were all this one big happy family during Homecoming until that Friday.

By the time the assembly started I was always sick to my stomach from watching the acceptance of this practice by our school – even by those involved in this new program we started in the fall of '97 called "Link Crew."

Over the past few years we have seen hazing almost completely disappear. It wasn't easy, believe me. Now I am not one to publicly bash the past, but you can ask any staff member who has been here as long as I have what it was like and what was done about it.

History has taught us that positive change takes someone to stand up and say enough is enough! Our change came in the form of a new principal about 10 years ago who took a lot of heat because some thought he was taking away a "tradition." Well, my pre-Homecoming Assembly stomach aches are

gone and that was no tradition.

So, why is this now an important part of MTHS History?

I have a lot of friends at Marysville-Pilchuck High School. Staff I have worked with at the state level of student leadership and students I have met at Leadership Camp. So, last Friday was one of the worst days I can ever remember. Everyone knows it takes all of us working together and respecting each other to even try to prevent these tragedies from happening. We can only speculate what happened at MPHS and other schools in America that have been forced to deal with this type of tragedy.

I do know that if we continue to work at eliminating things like hazing from any part of school life we are eliminating one reason for the chance of it happening here.

Please take a minute to think a positive thought, pray, meditate, whatever works for you, for those at Marysville-Pilchuck High School. Go Hawks! 📢

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