

The Migrant Caravan: Why it's a problem for the US

With a vast majority of Annandale being of immigrant descent, all eyes are on the large migrant caravan approaching America's southern border.

This is a serious issue for the United States



A group of Central Americans climb a wall on the border between the US and Mexico as others try to bring it down. This was taken near the El Chaparral crossing in Tijuana, Mexico.

and one issue that the U.S. doesn't need. Thousands of migrants from Honduras and surrounding nations have gathered and marched through Central American and through Mexican borders and security to get to the U.S. The migrants have been receiving travel help from civilians.

I believe we as a sovereign nation, need defensive borders. A country with no borders is no country, and I stand by that. We

can't allow people from other nations to just cross into our borders because they feel like it.

We all feel sympathetic for these people, it's human nature; however, the United States should not and cannot have the responsibility to take in anyone who wants to enter, without a vetting process and reasons such as work skills that would benefit the country.

Marching through the border forcefully isn't the solution for these people. Mexico kindly offered asylum for the migrants but they declined, beggars can't be choosers.

Trump has responded by providing more border security on the Mexican-American border, which caused mixed emotions for some reason, with people questioning the cost of it.

Trump has stopped funding governments such as the Central American ones that are corrupt and produce a bad state for these migrants to run away. The migrant caravan members are now demanding delusional reparations. One of the groups is demanding that each of them receive \$50,000 or else they expect immediate entry to the U.S.

What's sickening is that the parents bring their children into a field of tear gas and begin to complain. Having a child next to you doesn't give you the right to break the law. The parents just end up endangering their children and themselves.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and President Trump vowed to halt all foreign aid to the region if the caravan wasn't stopped. President López Obrador ordered \$30 billion to go to the development of Central America to act on the mass emigration.

I believe this is a proper response to the situation. The U.S. has laws and principles that we need to follow such as illegal entries through the border and the ability to deport people. Mexico offered hundreds of migrants refugee status, later on, the interior department reported thousands of refugee

applicants.

They all have the right to apply for such status, however, they have no right to illegally cross borders to apply for it. I believe Trump and the officers did a good job in bottling up the caravan to control it. Dozens of arrests have been made at the border from the caravan.

These are people wanting to escape their defective situation; however like already mentioned, the sovereignty and principles of the U.S. doesn't allow us to take precedence over running the country and domestic issues.

The continuing acceptance of the flooding migrants will have the best economy in the world dwindle. This is because letting thousands of undocumented, unvetted people that have no skills or anyway to benefit the economy and the country will take jobs and resources. Having a vetting process for them will allow the U.S. to pick and choose people that will work, pay taxes, and benefit themselves and their American peers.

Democrats have been using the immigration issue here against Republicans in a way that makes it seem like they're against Latinos and Hispanics; they want to defend the border over letting them in. Everyone wants a strong, secure border, even Latinos in America want to live with secured borders.

Senator Lindsey Graham spoke on the issue, "Do you want to be the country of people that run ya up and down the halls and spit on ya? Or do you want to be a country of Republicans that'll actually deliver for working families, that'll put good judges on the court, that'll stand up against the enemies of this country. Nancy Pelosi will welcome the caravans here. Donald Trump and the rest of us will stop them."

This isn't out of a lack of sympathy, it's because we need to abide by the rule of law in this country. The mainstream view of people flooding into the country being okay is wrong. Instead of worrying about migrants which have plenty of other

options to stay, worry about homeless veterans, a valuable education, or how to benefit the environment.

Brexit: Two years later

The exit part in “Brexit” is taking far too long as the negotiations have reached the one year mark. I agree with the United Kingdom leaving the union, however I disagree with some of the reasons behind leaving. The European Union is one of the most powerful groups in the world and they are about to lose one of its biggest members with the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom is not a country. It’s more like a country of countries. It is made up of four nations including England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The rest of Ireland is its own independent nation.

So what in the world is a Brexit? Brexit is the idea that the Brits will break away from the European Union. The European Union is a union consisting of 28 countries located primarily in Europe. This union was made to create peace in Europe and allow trade and transportation between countries to make everything less hectic and simpler. Most people in Britain seem to want to keep the trade structure with the rest of Europe, but they don’t want free travel without immigration restrictions in the U.K.

The United Kingdom wants to leave the union for reasons such as reduced immigration, reduced terrorism, and the fear of losing jobs, similar to how the United States is feeling towards other countries. The Brexit referendum that happened in the 2016 election has still not been carried out because it is unclear exactly how it could happen. A way that they could carry it out is through a Hard Brexit, which is where they could cut off trade relationships and immigration completely. There is also a Soft Brexit, which would keep the U.K.’s

relationship as close as possible with the E.U., but they would no longer be with the union.

The Brexit impacts the rest of the world significantly, not just Europe. The U.K. is the fifth biggest national economy in the world. This will affect the rest of the world's market and can lead to bad news for any country's economy. The U.K. is also America's seventh biggest trading partner. For the U.S., we worry that the breakup of the union, which is a vital ally, will create even more instability.

Are designer babies a good idea?

Imagine a world where parents are able to pick and choose the traits they want for their child. You could choose their eye color, hair color, height, gender, and any factor determined by genes.

This could be the new reality after a breakthrough by a Chinese scientist named He Jiankui from the Southern University of Science and Technology. Jiankui claims that he has created the world's first genetically edited human babies. He did it, he says, to protect the twin girls from HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. He did this using a powerful new gene editing technique called CRISPR to perform genetic surgery on their DNA when they were just a single-cell embryo in his lab.

While Jiankui's experiment is quite a breakthrough, it is very controversial. For one, no one knows whether Jiankui really did what he claims. His experiment hasn't been verified by any independent scientists. But if he did what he says he did, it's being widely condemned as irresponsible human

experimentation.

It is a good thing if we are able to eliminate harmful diseases from the gene pool, but editing genes has serious ethical repercussions.

Because of the potentially expensive costs of the operation, it could lead to widening gap between the rich and poor. Those who could afford to have a “designer baby” could create a custom baby with blond hair and blue eyes, improved athletic abilities, enhanced reading or math skills and more. This would create an even greater disparity between the rich and the poor.

The ethical, as well as legal, issues posed by gene editing is a minefield, and there are not enough positives to outweigh the negatives.

Positives

- Decreases the risk of genetic disease like Alzheimer's
- Decreases the risk of inherited diseases like cancer
- Increases quality of life
- Can increase the human lifespan by up to 30 years
- The parents can pick and choose the traits they want for their child

Negatives

- It is not error free, and could cause debilitating issues
- Most people will create babies with optimum characteristics, everyone will be relatively similar.
- The child is unable to consent to something that will affect their life forever
- Can contribute to a gap in society between the rich and poor

Should students stand for the pledge?

Yes, it is a unifying factor for the country

The Pledge of Allegiance is said at every school across Virginia, according to state law. It's a symbol of patriotism and respect while summarizing the points of what the U.S. stands for, in theory.

Many do not understand the importance of the pledge and the meaning behind it, so they question why they should stand. As an American, I believe it shouldn't even be a debate whether or not we stand.

We stand for the flag in order to honor those who fight, who have fought and who have died to protect our freedom and safety. We stand for the pledge to focus on what unites us as Americans not divides us. We stand for the flag not to pledge allegiance to a president, but to honor the reality that we have an elected president and not a lifetime king.

When I look at America and the pledge, I also look at other countries such as Iran and North Korea. Oppressive countries like those that don't allow anyone to publicly disrespect national symbols.

People that take these freedoms for granted are foolishly disrespecting what binds us together as Americans. Sitting during the pledge and kneeling for the anthem is not the correct time to protest racial injustice. The flag, pledge,

and anthem stand for more than that, and some people fail to realize that.

Some of these people are like blind sheep following each other. There are reasons why some students don't stand, but those are only a few intelligent students that think with reasoning. Most students are lazy and when asked why they don't stand they reply with "I don't know, I just don't feel like it."

Several Supreme Court decisions have codified that no one has to recite the pledge, let alone stand when it is recited. That is your right as a citizen. I agree with it being voluntary because a forced recital would be like something done in a Nazi society.

The act of sitting during a national unifying pledge to the country that grants you individual freedoms is not only stupid but it is also self-defeating and misdirected.

Then again, in most places, sitting and not standing is more of a statement about yourself than about America. You don't come off as too smart, instead you come off as ignorant and ungrateful to the rights you are given.

No, students have freedom of speech

The United States of America is a free and democratic nation. There are no laws requiring students to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Therefore, students should not feel compelled to do something they do not want to do. Under the rules of a democracy, it is wrong to force someone to speak or do what they don't want to do.

It's important to note that students who don't participate in the pledge aren't doing so just because they are lazy or

because they don't care about the country. There are a multitude of reasons.

Many students see an issue with blindly professing an allegiance to a country. You should not have to pledge allegiance to a country that is doing things you do not agree with. For that reason, many students have chosen to not stand for the pledge because they disagree with the policies of the current president, Donald Trump.

Another reason students choose not to stand for the pledge is the phrase "One nation, under God." One important element of freedom in the U.S. is freedom of religion. The U.S. may have a majority of people who are monotheistic, but that doesn't mean that everyone believes we are united under one god. In fact, the phrase "under God" was added to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954 by President Eisenhower. At the time, the Cold War was gaining steam, and Eisenhower was fighting communism across the globe. Back then, atheism was associated with communism, so he added "under God" to further separate the U.S. from the ideas of communism. But, this phrase just simply isn't as relevant nowadays, and is the reason many students choose not to stand for the pledge.

Many students also find issue with the phrase "with liberty and justice for all." Many feel America discriminates against race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, nationality, so on and so forth. The idea of pledging allegiance to a country that doesn't support them is ridiculous to them.

Whatever the reason, students should not feel obligated to stand for the pledge. Even if a teacher claims it's mandatory, the reality is, students can choose whether or not they want to stand for the pledge.

Timeline of the Pledge of Allegiance

1887

George T. Balch, former Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army, writes the handbook *Methods of Teaching Patriotism in the Public Schools*. His campaign includes the placing of US flags in all public schools.

1892

Francis Bellamy writes the first Pledge of Allegiance with the words "I Pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands; one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All."

1898

The custom of rising for the flag begins during the Spanish-American war as patriotism increases.

1923

The National Flag Code is adopted at the National Flag Conference and it includes the Pledge of Allegiance.

1940

The Supreme Court rules 8-1 in the case of *Minersville School District v. Gobitis* that students can be expelled for refusing to recite the pledge.

1943

The Supreme Court reverses their ruling in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* deciding that students cannot be forced to recite the pledge.

1954

President Eisenhower signs a law adding the words 'under God' during the Cold War saying "we are reaffirming the

transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future."

1992

Seventh Circuit Court rules that students may opt out of reciting the Pledge in the case of *Sherman v. Community Consolidated School District 21*.

Why it should be "Merry Christmas" and not "Happy Holidays"

Every winter, a conflict reignites. A "War on Christmas" is raged every December. The topic of discussion is whether or not it is appropriate to say Merry Christmas.

In our parents' time and even in our older siblings' time, they would go to elementary school, middle school, and high school. They would not wish each other, "Happy Holidays" they would say, "Merry Christmas." When they would go on break it wouldn't be, "Winter Break" it would be, "Christmas Break." This was not because our parents were insensitive or because they were denying people their right to religious freedom. It was because that was the official holiday celebrated, and it still is the official holiday celebrated.

Each year the United States Government comes out with a list of National Holidays that the federal government will observe that year. These are the only *official* holidays in the United States and almost all businesses observe these holidays. This system is great because, just like the Constitution, it is

liable for change. In the month of December, the only official federal holiday is Christmas. Therefore, when we get off school in December, it is not because it is winter or because of any other holiday it is because of the national holiday, Christmas.

The evidence proves that Christmas is the only federal holiday in December, and what people should wish each other. Every year when people go shopping, they go Christmas shopping, not winter shopping. The stores are decorated with bright reds and greens instead of any other colors. Children are even able to see Santa Claus at the mall.

People who are opposed to Christmas say that it is not inclusive to everyone, and that it is not a big deal to change Merry Christmas to Happy Holidays, but it is a big deal. The National Retail Federation estimates that \$465 billion will be spent on total gifts this winter, and according to the Pew Research center 9 in 10 Americans celebrate Christmas. Around \$419 billion will be spent on Christmas gifts alone this year. This is a substantial amount of money, and so it would be significant to no longer use the phrase, "Merry Christmas."

The fact of the matter is "Merry Christmas" no longer has the same religious connotation as it once did. Thus, when people wish each other a Merry Christmas it is no longer a religious greeting. The same is true in the United Kingdom. In the UK citizens wish each other Merry Christmas, and they are fine with it because Christmas no longer has the same religious implication. In fact, the man who wrote "White Christmas," Irving Berlin, a classic Christmas song that is played methodically each year was an American Jew. Even here at Annandale with such a diverse community people are okay with greeting each other with Merry Christmas.

When you greet your friends this winter, wish them Happy Hanukkah or Happy Kwanzaa, if you know, but if you greet people generally you should not be afraid to wish them Merry

Christmas.

What if you don't want to wish them Merry Christmas? Well then just wish them, "Feliz Navidad."

Trump email hypocrisy

Emails! Emails! Emails! This was a constant refrain during the 2016 election cycle. Republicans made sure voters knew about Hilary Clinton's private email scandal and Donald Trump even made it one of his main focuses in his campaign, labeling his opponent "Crooked Hillary". This makes the actions of Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter as well as a part of Trump's Cabinet as Special Advisor, all the more hypocritical.

All federal employees must abide by certain ethics, standards, and rules. This includes following guidelines that are set in place to protect classified information from getting into the wrong hands. Ivanka Trump was found to have breached this as White House officials learned that for most of 2017, she sent hundreds of emails that discussed private White House business using a private email.

The spokesman for Ivanka Trump's Lawyer, Peter Mirijanian, said in a statement that Trump only used her private email sporadically and before she was a briefed on the rules. He also said that no classified information was sent.

However, this does not excuse what she did. You would think that since her father's main attack against Hilary Clinton was for using a personal email account as secretary of state she, of all people, would know how wrong it is.

She and her lawyers are claiming that she didn't know that it

was a violation of federal guidelines but I refuse to believe that she is that ignorant. Clearly, everyone joining the Trump administration should have been on high alert about personal email use.

Ivanka Trump's actions are inexcusable and she should know better.

Should FCPS make holiday breaks longer?

Going to school for consecutive months can get overwhelming. This might cause students many health issues if they don't begin to take care of themselves and value their health over their academics.

A solution to this issue is that students need to have a longer break during the holiday season in order to allow students to rest up and maintain good mental health. Currently students in FCPS for Thanksgiving break get from November 21 to November 23 off, for Winter break get from December 24 to January 4 off, and for Spring break get from April 15 to April 19 off. At the end of quarters student get a day or so off, as well. For example, some schools in Creede District Colorado, only go to school four days a week.

"I don't really have time to think about my health and mental health, because I'm so focused on getting good grades," sophomore Kristina Regmi said.

Many students spend a lot of time stressing over achieving good grades and not paying attention to how academics are affecting their mental health. Students become concerned about

the amount of homework that is due and the tests that they have each week. This leads to students staying up late at night and finishing assignments.

Sleep deprivation can put students at risk of heart issues such as heart disease, heart attacks, heart failure and irregular heartbeat. With the presence of sleep deprivation, individuals will also potentially be at risk of high blood pressure, stroke and diabetes. These are only a few things that can occur to someone if they don't get enough sleep and conditions that students need to be aware of.

Stress can have many effects on your body, such as, headaches, muscle tension or pain, chest pain, fatigue, stomach pain, and sleep problems. Stress can also have effects on your mood, such as, anxiety, restlessness, lack of motivation or focus, feeling overwhelmed, irritability or anger and sadness or depression. Additionally, stress can also affect someone's behavior, such as, overeating or under-eating, angry outbursts, drug or alcohol abuse, tobacco use, social withdrawal, and exercising less often.

All of these potentially long-term health issues may have serious effects on students. Individuals can be suffering from any of these things or have the symptoms and not think that it is anything serious or they might not know.

Having longer holiday breaks would give students time to not stress and enjoy themselves. It would also allow students to rest their minds and lessen focus on school. Having breaks would benefit students greatly and reduce the risk rate of having any issues.

"If we had longer breaks I would finally have some time to myself and not be stressing myself out every day," freshman Ibrahim Osman said. Fairfax County Public Schools should take all those things into consideration and make at least one of the holiday breaks longer. Thanksgiving break, Winter break,

Spring Break, or Summer break can all be made a little bit longer to reduce the stress and pressure that students feel.

The 2018 midterms bring about mixed results

Election night was exciting. The night started with people thinking Republicans were going to defy all expectations of political gravity. By the time the night was over, it looked sort of like what most people predicted.

The most important thing was historic voter turnouts. About 113 million people voted, around 48% of eligible voters. That is up from 83 million votes in 2014. The voter turnout is actually more comparable to the presidential elections in 2016 with 138.8 million voters. Overall, we believe that the historic midterms will leave a positive effect on the United States.

Whether it's the new balance of power with the House, the widening Senate gap, or the impressive number of women and races in Congress, the midterms proved interesting to say the least.

It was predicted that Democrats would win 45 seats, turned out they won 34. It was also predicted that Republicans would pick up 2-4 seats in the Senate, which they did. This has led to a lot of puzzlement, how could the Republicans lose the House, but pick up seats in the Senate?

The math was uniquely bad for Democrats this time around in the Senate. Republicans did over perform, and yes President Trump had something to do with that. President Trump visited a bunch of battleground states in hotly contested Senate races, and every place he visited, that candidate won.

President Trump has a unique gift for getting the base revved

up, particularly in close Senate elections that do matter. So he does have coattails when it comes to getting the base out, he does have reverse coattails however, when it comes to House races. Virtually every purple seat that was contested, every seat in the suburban district that Republicans held, went to Democrats last night. That is deeply troubling for Republicans. However, a Democratic house is overall good for the country, as it will limit some of the executive power in the country.

More locally, Senator Tim Kaine won big over Republican candidate Corey Stewart. Personally, we have never agreed with Tim Kaine in the past, and I doubt I will in the future. However, he is the representative Virginians selected. As expected, Northern Virginia went completely Democratic, with Gerry Connolly and Jennifer Wexton winning in Districts 10 and 11.

The good news for Republicans is that the 'beloved' campaigns of candidates Beto O'Rourke of Texas and Andrew Gilliam of Florida came to an end. Beto O'Rourke had spent more money than God has, \$70 million, and still lost his race.

All that said Beto O'Rourke and other candidates still lost their campaigns after spending tons of money.

On top of that, Andrew Gillum goes down in Florida, who was another person according to polls, was going to win. Ron DeSantis instead, comes from behind and snatches victory from what should have been a defeat. DeSantis and Scott will come up and prove why they're great representatives for the state. As days passed, it looked like the midterm results were not all in and recounts have taken place. Florida and Arizona are both states in which the GOP have achieved big victories on the night of the elections.

However in the following days, thousands of mysterious votes began to appear in mostly Democratic leaning areas and the Democrats demanded a recount.

This seems just a bit fishy and it brings up the question to what is actually going on.

Senator Marco Rubio of Florida tweeted out, "Now democrat

lawyers are descending on #Florida. They have been very clear they aren't here to make sure every vote is counted; They are here to change the results of the election and #Broward is where they plan to do it."

The Democrats basically confirmed this in a press conference where they said they aren't just here to recount, they're here to win.

I don't believe anyone has a problem with the recounts taking place, the problem lies with them focusing just on two counties. Bay County got hit by a category 4 hurricane four weeks prior to the elections and they still had a 52% voter turnout and got all the ballots in on time.

Broward County wasn't hit by a catastrophic hurricane or anything of the sorts, so people don't see a reason to why counting is still taking place 48 hours later.

Another problem is the amount of votes that have happened. They don't know how many votes they have gotten and neither do we. How many ballots are left to count? They won't make a mention of it and tell nobody. Results still came up with a Rick Scott victory however, and it appears the Democratic candidate is now leading in Arizona.

There was no "blue wave," if there was, the Senate would be under democratic control, which it isn't. In governor elections, Republicans won big as well in Maryland, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts, all blue states that were supposed to win those races.

The Republicans defied most expectations and actually grew their majority in the Upper House, which has not been a common occurrence in the past 100 years. The loses in the House were a lot less historical than what people predicted as well.

Is Daylight Saving Time worth it?

Daylight Saving Time ended this weekend, and clocks around the U.S. were shifted an hour back, giving everyone an extra hour of sleep. Everyone loves getting an extra hour of sleep, but many people question whether Daylight Saving Time is worth the headaches it causes.

Contrary to popular belief, Daylight Saving Time was not introduced to benefit farmers. Many farmers actually opposed the initial introduction of Daylight Saving Time when it was first experimented with during World War I to increase productivity during wartime. The sun, not the clock, dictated farmers' schedules, so daylight saving was very disruptive to them. Therefore, the argument that Daylight Saving Time exists for the agriculture industry isn't really valid, as most farmers have their own schedule based around the sunrise and sunset.

Many advocates of Daylight Saving Time argue that it saves energy, but that really isn't the case. A U.S. Department of Transportation study in the 1970s concluded that total electricity savings associated with daylight saving time amounted to about 1% in the spring and fall months. This was supposedly due to the lessened usage of indoor lighting due to the adjusted hours from Daylight Saving Time. In modern society, our use of technology is so extensive that any saved energy from usage of lighting would be negligible. According to a study by University of California Santa Barbara economists, they calculated that Indiana's move to statewide daylight saving time in 2006 led to a 1% rise in residential electricity use through additional demand for air conditioning on summer evenings and heating in early spring and late fall mornings. This shows the uselessness of Daylight Saving Time in terms of saving energy, as in this case it actually

increased energy usage.

Daylight Saving Time is also negative for our health. Changing the time, even by an hour, disrupts our circadian rhythm, also known as our sleep/wake cycle.

The resulting tiredness can be just an inconvenience for some, but it can be more serious for others. A study by two professors from Michigan State University concluded that Daylight Saving Time causes a 67.6% decrease in productivity at workplaces and a 5.7% increase in workplace injuries. If this is the result in a workplace, imagine the effect in the U.S. population as a whole.

The loss of sleep thanks to Daylight Saving Time can contribute to other health issues like heart attacks and traffic accidents. Daylight Saving Time also contributes to seasonal affective disorder, which is a mood disorder characterized by depression that occurs at the same time every year. This is thanks to the early evening darkness, which can negatively affect the mood of some people.

Daylight Saving Time has caused non-stop debate on if the function should even exist. It's quite evident that it has many drawbacks, and not many positives. Daylight Saving Time would not be missed.

How hazing leads to death

Have you ever thought about what hazing is or how it originated? Hazing is broadly known as a type of initiation for newcomers participating in clubs or sports in both high school and college. Hazing is nothing new. Fraternities have been beating and torturing pledges as part of initiations the

last 200 years.

The death of pledges and teammates due to hazing have also been around for several hundred years. The first recorded death was back in 1873 when a member of a fraternity at Cornell University was blindfolded and forced to walk home in the dark. On his way, he fell off a cliff and died. The consequences were very lenient back then, so hazing seemed like it was not a big deal.

Greek life perpetuates an environment of fear. It involves heavy drinking and verbal abuse, the opposite of a brotherhood. College students are all aware that fraternities include actions of hazing. But it is guaranteed that no high schooler expects their teammates to violate them in such a way.

Cases regarding hazing have risen in recent times. In the month of October, eight cases related to hazing have been reported. Tuscarora High School, located in Leesburg, Virginia, was put under investigation after three football players were accused of sexually assaulting a teammate.

After a practice during the team's football season, the Tuscarora players held their teammate down and allegedly "inserted objects into the victim". The event came unexpectedly to the team as they were completely thrown off and felt as if they weren't safe anymore. The team canceled practice for two days, but none of their games were canceled.

Incidents like these raise concern for other schools, students, and coaches.

"It's crazy to think that some people could actually hurt their teammates in any way," senior Alex Bellem said. "Coach Maglisceau does not allow hazing. He warned us last season that he doesn't want to see or hear any type of actions regarding that."

If you would like to see a perspective of what being hazed is like, watch the movie "Burning Sands". It is a Netflix Original which is based on a group of friends that attend Frederick Douglass University. They are pledges for an African-American fraternity group who undergo a series of violent hazing tactics.

In conclusion, the prevention of hazing must be spread in schools throughout the country. Students must report to authorities if they experience or witness an act of abuse towards a pledge or a teammate.

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Think twice about Black

Friday

Stampedes, fights and severe exhaustion. Black Friday may seem like an innocent day to purchase items at their lowest prices, but that cannot be further from the truth. The attraction to sales make people crazy and greedy rather than thankful, resulting in a violent day where all common sense is abandoned.

There have been many deaths and injuries over the past years on Black Friday. For instance, in 2016, a shopper shot someone over a parking spot in front of Walmart. Despite the tragedy, the store stayed open for other Black Friday shoppers while police officers investigated the scene.

In 2013, a teenager named Patrick Henry Boyd died because he fell asleep at the wheel after a late night Black Friday shopping spree. He ran off the road and hit a sign in front of a gas station, landing himself and the four other passengers of the car in the hospital.

Some people remember Black Friday solely as the day they bought that cute pink sweater from Forever 21 or scored a pair of usually expensive sneakers from Foot Locker. What about the vast majority of people who get into a brawl or slammed into a wall?

“When I was ten years old, I walked into Best Buy thinking I would come out with a new iPad,” sophomore Kalkedan Gashaw said. “I was there for a good five minutes before some stranger running to the checkout line slammed his hand into my face knocking me off balance. My face was so red, I never even got an apology.”

Senior Onik Anwar shares the same uneasy feeling toward Black Friday.

“Last year, I was at Tysons Corner with my baby sister,” Anwar

said. "There was this guy who was pushing his way through a store, and he tripped over my sister's stroller. I guess he hurt his wrist badly because he started moaning and holding onto it while rocking back and forth. His friend started yelling and telling me to watch where I was going. We started arguing for a long time, but I decided to be the bigger person and walk away."

Black Friday sales aren't just available in stores. They can also be found online for a longer period of time. Why freeze in the cold when you can shop from the comfort of your home?

"I hate walking around, especially in a crowd and when there's so much noise. Online shopping is the way for me," sophomore Elsa Amurrio said.

There's no denying that Black Friday helps a lot of people save money and get a start on their Christmas shopping, but people should be able to do that without putting themselves at risk.