

Quite SATirical...

How does the modern SAT compare to the SAT of the olden days?

By Masha Goncharova
Editor-in-Chief/Manager

Fifteen years ago, when all cell phones weighed about a pound and the SAT was only out of 1600 points, getting into college was a completely different, easier process. As many Ivy alumni will admit, they probably wouldn't have gotten into their alma mater if they applied now.

What has changed?

In one word, competition.

In current day America, circa eighty percent of colleges are ranked "walk-ins," where getting accepted means walking in the door, so to speak.

This leaves a meager 20% of institutions to offer a good education. It does not come as a surprise, then, that 60% of American students—bright, athletic and well-rounded—are pulling their hair out to get into this prestige. Not only students, but parents, too, find themselves spending thousands on test prep courses for the SAT or the ACT.

College prep companies like Bar-

ron's, Sparknotes and Princeton Review are reaping the benefits of this mass anxiety of getting into college. From books to websites to classes, the test preparation market has skyrocketed over the past decade.

The SAT—the test that determines the rest of your life. Do well, and a full one-third of your application is complete. Do poorly, then you better be going home to study for a retake. However, classes are offered by a number of prep programs.

Cheating the system—the phrase was coined to signify students who will pay thousands of dollars for some tutor to drill the tricks and treachery of the test into them. That's why the SAT has come to be known as an indicator of wealth.

The CollegeBoard (aka: the highest echelon of college admissions that has ever existed) recently announced that starting in March 2008, students may retake the SAT as many times as they want but only send in one score. The undeniable question is—did the CollegeBoard really do this out of sympathy for students who can't get it right the first time? Or, was it to increase the CollegeBoard's yearly income (of millions of kids taking the \$80 test over and over again) and perhaps encourage more people to take prep courses.

Books like "Bad Education: A semiscientific guide to the worst colleges in America" attempt to ridicule student stress with a guide to the worst colleges done in the same style and seriousness as the Princeton Review's best colleges. Still, students don't seem too pacified by the comedy.

The most ridiculous thing, though, in my mind is what everyone seems to forget. The goal of the SAT is to show colleges what you know and don't know—not what you can pay to know.

I must admit that I have fallen prey to this vicious cycle myself. It shames me to look at the massive shelves (yes—more than one!) of prep books for the SAT, SAT II, ACT and AP tests. In fact, I am not only ashamed, but I'm also disappointed.

I'll find myself doing homework for the sole reason of keeping my grade up so that I can maintain an A, and then my GPA will be higher, and then I'll have about one-one hundredth more of a chance of getting into college.

This is a friendly reminder that students who have the above mindset should stop and think. We're only young once, so why don't we make it last by doing at least something fun?

Barbara Laird passed away on Friday, November 14, 2008.

She moved to Bluebird Canyon in 1970 and later built a new home there. Barbara was always the first one to organize neighborhood caroling or help a neighbor in need.

With her natural instinct to help others, Barbara worked for the Capistrano-



Barbara Laird passed away Nov. 14. She worked with LBHS for 13 years.

Laguna Beach Regional Occupational Program in career planning with thirteen years at Laguna Beach High School and three years at San Clemente High School. The students at these high schools will always remember her thoughtful assistance as they looked to their future.

A loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother and friend to so many Barbara will be remembered at a 2 p.m. Memorial Service on Saturday, November 22, 2008 at the Laguna Presbyterian Church. Instead of flowers the family asks that Barbara's spirit be remembered through a donation to either the Open Door Program, Laguna Presbyterian Church, 415 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651; the Laguna Beach High School Scholarship Foundation, Barbara Laird Memorial Scholarship, 625 Park Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 or the Capistrano-Laguna Beach ROP, Barbara Laird Memorial Scholarship, 31522 El Camino Real, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675.

Editorial

Not the stereotypical jocks

By The Brush and Palette staff

The stereotypical jock is portrayed as very involved in his sport, often neglectful of his homework, lazy in his classes, and occasionally pretentious about his skill.

However, at Laguna Beach High School, this mold is broken. Not only are its sports teams composed of many talented and respectful athletes, but they are intelligent as well. A schedule with Honors and AP classes is not uncommon among the members of the teams.

But ten years ago, the school was just as one would imagine it to be, divided into many social groups, including the jocks in one and the artists in the other. However, this has changed over the years, and many of the groups now overlap.

Not only are the "jocks" of our school today involved in their sports and college level classes, but they also participate in extracurricular activities, such as Model United Nations, chorus and the drama department.

Laguna Beach High School is a school full of artists, but sports play an integral part as well. We are not a one-dimensional student body.

We are fortunate to have not only talented artists, singers and actors at our school, but also a new "Laguna Beach" breed of athlete, one that does not fit the typical stereotype.

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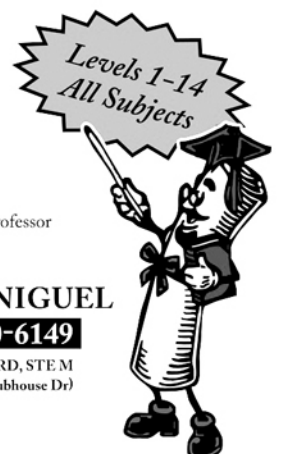
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