

Appreciation for Animation is Almost Absent

By Isabella Talavera

Copy Editor

It seems like another Disney live-action film is announced every few months, from this year's *Mulan* to the upcoming *The Little Mermaid*. But the last news we got on an animated movie was the trailer for the upcoming 2021 movie, *Raya and the Last Dragon* by Disney. Why can't we just have a new, original animated movie?

Despite the hype for live-actions, they fall flat compared to animated content on sites like Rotten Tomatoes. Possibly the most famous rating difference are the percentages for the beloved cartoon, *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (ATLA) from Nickelodeon with its 100%

rating, and the horrendous live-action's five percent. ATLA's entire world and cast are based on Asian and Inuit cultures and people, something rarely done due to Eurocentric fantasy. However, the live-action whitewashed the majority of the characters. The antagonists, the people of the Japanese based Fire Nation, were made Indian and not Japanese. The acting was sub-par, the names mispronounced, the bending (the ability to manipulate the world's elements) consisted of bad dancing and arm waving and not the martial arts they were modeled after. It was such a mess that fans pretend the movie doesn't exist. There was meant to be a fourth season of ATLA, but this was canceled due to the live-action movie.

This year, Netflix and the creators of ATLA, Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko, announced that they would be remaking the live-action ATLA as a Netflix series. ATLA is still set to be a live-action despite the creators leaving the project due to creative differences, leaving fans denouncing the live-action again.

I find kids' cartoons like *She Ra and the Princesses of Power* and *The Dragon Prince* (which is from ATLA's creators) on Netflix to be more entertaining due to the rich characters, worlds, and animation. There's just something about watching the colors swirl on the screen that makes animation so appealing and satisfying. Cartoons like ATLA could've been as popular as Harry Potter with people asking what nation you're from and what bender you are the way they ask what Hogwarts house you're in, but they're not because they're solely that: cartoons. People want to see their favorite shows and movies reenacted to fit our world, but animators work so hard to give us our favorite content. Art is a beautiful method of storytelling, so the work put into animation shouldn't be brushed aside just for the sake of live-actions.



PHOTO COURTESY ASHWORTH'S FILM REVIEWS

Praised for its soundtrack, animation, characters, themes, humor, and worldbuilding, Avatar: The Last Airbender is a beloved cartoon amongst kids and adults alike. Sadly, the live-action version falls flat in all those aspects despite its \$150 million budget and tarnished the name of live-action remakes.

Millikan Dancers Leap Into Zoom Classes
By Paris Blanco
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Over the course of this school year, Millikan Dance has navigated the difficult seas of virtual athletics. However, the dance program has come up with unique and creative ways to provide its dancers with class and performances virtually.

To combat pandemic limitations, Millikan Dance now holds rehearsals over Zoom, which include technique and choreography classes led by various local dance teachers.

COMPASS freshman Shelby Edwards states, “I am so excited that in this home environment, I can still meet new people who enjoy some of the same things I do... I feel this season we have some fantastic captains, so I am very hopeful as a freshman.”

When asked about the pros and cons of online dancing, PEACE junior Victoria Iglesias says, “I like that I’m able to move with the people I love, even if it’s virtually. One thing I don’t like is I’m not able to have a real life connection with the girls on the team.”

“Some successes that I have experienced during the process of holding dance class over zoom are that my upper level teams have been able to keep things as “normal” as possible by continuing to take technique classes,” says Millikan Dance director, Mrs. Waters, “Some obstacles are not being able to work with my students in person. Also, motivating and encouraging my students to feel safe and comfortable enough to turn on their cameras during our zoom classes.”

However, one concern that has risen from this new form of dance class is: how will performance opportunities work this year? In previous years, dancers have participated in school performances, dance shows, and parades. In the face of the pandemic, this may seem impossible to achieve.

Mrs. Waters states, “We are already planning our very own virtual concert. I hope we will be able to have more virtual rallies and assemblies in order to give the dancers more opportunities.”

According to QUEST junior, Lola Burton, “I am most excited about our plans for a virtual dance show. Showcasing our hard work over Zoom will be interesting.”

Although this school year looks immensely different from the past, the Millikan Dance program works hard to create a memorable year for its dancers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MRS. WATERS
Millikan Dance Director, Mrs. Waters, showcases her zoom set up in the dance room on campus. These zoom meetings broadcast various types of dance classes to the dancers' homes. Pictured above is the intermediate 5-6 dance team.

Minimum Days: Our New Norm?

By Sophie Bright

Editorial Editor

When school returned from summer vacation on September 1st, it was not normal. The district said we would be transitioning into virtual school rather than being on campus.

September 1st (for Millikan) was a green day, which meant that we went to all of our classes. This day was also a

minimum day, and school remained on a minimum day schedule for two weeks. When online school went back to normal day schedule, the days felt very long because it was a four hour day of staring at a screen. As a result, a petition was even started to remain on a minimum day schedule, as students were already used to the minimum day schedule.

The petition was started by a Millikan student and many people throughout the district did sign it. The petition for the minimum day schedule ended up getting around 20,000 signatures! There was a meeting on September 16th, held by the district, where they claimed that they would address this issue but they never posed any plausible compromise. The permanent minimum day schedule was never put into action because the district voiced that they needed to meet certain hourly requirements of the school day.

One reason many prefer to stay on our minimum day schedule is eye strain. Staring at a screen for too long can be strenuous to the eyes and after a long time staring at a bright screen can start to feel like your eyes are burning. Some people have bought blue light glasses which are said to protect your eyes from the bright screens.

Webmd.com posted an article about whether blue light glasses really do help and this is what was found, “Greg Rogers, senior optician at Eyeworks in Decatur, GA, says he’s seen the benefits of blue light glasses among the shop’s customers. The staff asks a client how much time they spend in front of a screen daily. If it’s 6 hours or more, some sort of blue light reduction technique is recommended, whether it’s glasses or a special screen for a computer monitor.”

Although the school day is not always six hours or more, if you add the time of homework done and time on other technology after school, it ends up being much more.

Another factor is that students were already having a hard time focusing on their computer during the hour long classes we had during the minimum days. It’s harder for them to focus, thus making their work proficiency decrease.

Along with that subject, students are at home where their work environment is not ideal and it is easier for them to get distracted. Whether that be their phone or household responsibilities, that would normally not take place in a typical classroom environment

So, we still remain on a normal day schedule as if we were in person, but that doesn't change the fact that online school is a struggle and an event that will go down in history.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MILLIKAN HIGH SCHOOL WEBSITE

A sample of a minimum day schedule Millikan High School uses during the 2020-2021 school year. This schedule was for Back to School Night.

Why is the Return of Sports Being Prioritized Over the Arts?

By Emma Sharman

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Many high school students have been stripped of their outlets for expression and exercise.

The arts are not just a distraction, but an outlet.

The Athletes and the Arts (AATA) association, which was originally created by the American College of Sports Medicine, makes the point that “Both athletes and artists practice or play every day, play through pain, perform at all times of day or night, compete in challenging environments, enjoy little “off-season,” feel strong pressure to succeed, and risk career-threatening injury.” As a matter of fact, Sports and Exercise Psychology is its own “genre,” of psychological practice; it has been expanded over time to include not only athletes, but also stage performers, lawyers and even surgeons.

Evidently, athletics and the arts are not so different. So why are they receiving different treatment by schools in the face of distance learning?

There are a couple reasons why sports are being eased back onto campus and arts are not, and as much as I hate to admit it - it does make sense.

Firstly, there are substantial financial benefits that go hand-in-hand with the athletics program. While the sports program and the arts program are both significant sources of income for Millikan, sports do tend to outshine.

According to COMPASS Senior and Student Football Manager April Brown, “The truth is that football is a major money maker - it’s one of the sports that brings the most spirit. Even if you’re not into sports, a football game gets students out of the house.” Having a high-energy environment (like a football game) where students can be surrounded by peers also helps to repair the lack of socialization that is currently being experienced, which is all the more reason for the district to push to get sports like football back on campus. The goal is to be able to hold football games at school in a safe way, whether that means keeping the bleachers at low capacity or only selling a limited number of tickets.



PHOTO COURTESY OF APRIL BROWN AND THE MILLIKAN FOOTBALL WEBSITE

Despite the unusual and unfortunate circumstances at the current time, the Millikan football team has a belated homecoming schedule planned, as depicted in the above infographic. This graphic can also be found on the Millikan football website and Instagram page.

“It was the district [that] we had to get approval from. There [are] documented papers we had to fill out with COVID regulations. If you don’t have the papers, you’re not allowed on campus - you’re asked to leave or you’re benched. That’s how serious it is.” Brown explains, adding that she feels very safe and comfortable with the way sports are being handled in the face of the COVID crisis. Brown is also a member of jazz band and choir at Millikan. She states that she can envision these programs being handled in a similar manner if they were to return to campus, but understands why sports came first.

Similarly, QUEST Sophomore Ethan Emami, who is a member of the Millikan baseball team, mentions that “we’re all masked and we social distance the entire time. I’m paranoid about [the virus] so if I feel comfortable, you know it’s pretty safe.”

This brings me to the second reason why the district is more inclined to approve sports practices - students are dependent on their athletic capabilities in order to obtain scholarships.

“The football players - some of them already have scholarships. Some of them have already been scouted, and if they go this long without conditioning or getting any type of [practice] in, they’re in jeopardy,” Brown says, “Even though football *is* practicing [on campus], it’s only to condition.”

Additionally, there is an existing football/homecoming schedule that has been adapted to take place during spring semester (which is available to view on the Millikan Football instagram [@millikanramsfootball](#) or on the [millikan football website](#)), so the football players have a goal to work towards. The performing arts students on the other hand don’t know when it’s going to be safe to have concerts or performances, so there is less motivation to accommodate rehearsals.

The Millikan sports teams have been making good moves to ensure the safety and security of their athletes, and I think it’s time that the arts program starts taking some baby steps where possible - similar to what the sports team has executed.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg
By Kezziah Hernandez
Social media Editor

“Women belong in all places where decisions are being made,” the wise Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said. The Supreme Court Justice passed on September 18th with complications of pancreatic cancer. Her death was an utmost tragedy, because of her work with women’s rights and equality amongst all people regardless of skin color, gender, or sexual orientation.

In 1974 she helped pass the Equal Credit Opportunity, which allowed women to finally apply or receive credit cards, bank accounts, and mortgages without a male co-signer and helped get more military housing allowances and no longer required to pay more pension plans than men to receive the same benefits as men. She advocated gender equality for all genders and passed the law where men are entitled to the same caregiving and social security rights as women.

AP U.S. Government and Politics teacher, Dr. Rudman states, “For several decades, she was the most powerful protector of gender equality at work, in families, and throughout society.”

RGB, as she was commonly known, served in the Supreme Court from 1993 until her death; she was appointed by former president Bill Clinton. She went to Cornell University and decided to attend Harvard Law in 1956 where she was one of nine women in her class out of 522 men. She then taught at Rutgers University Law school from 1963-1972 and Columbia University from 1972-1980 where she became the school’s first female tenured professor.

RGB had such an impact for everyone to have equality and people can only hope that her legacy continues and that we can improve on the dent she left for us to make better. According to Dr. Rudman, “The immediate impact [of RBG’s death] seems to be an increased likelihood in conservative policy shifts regarding women’s rights, gun control, abortion, collective bargaining, campaign finance, and racial equality.”

President Donald Trump has nominated Amy Coney Barret, a conservative federal judge and Notre Dame Law professor. When asked about this situation regarding the Supreme Court, Dr. Rudman says, “Conservatives sense a once-in-a-lifetime chance to achieve legal victories. Progressives, on the other hand, see bad faith behavior from Republicans who didn’t grant Obama the same power. It’s up to voters to reward or punish Republicans for putting Amy Coney Barrett on the court in this manner.”

All in all, Ruth Bader Ginsburg led an inspirational and progressive life; her legacy continues to inspire others and affect American politics.

Athletics on Return?

By Liana Ngauv

Web Editor

Sports have been on hiatus this season due to COVID-19. However, for some sports, limitations have been slightly relieved so athletes can participate in games again.

“CIF has pushed the sports calendar back to allow for the opportunity for sports to happen. It will be crowded, and it will require a lot of cooperation [amongst the] sports in order to work effectively, but I do believe that we have a very good shot at sports happening this school year.” Kevin Marchael, Millikan High School Athletic Director says. “The winter and spring seasons have been combined which allows for every sport to have an adequate playoff system. This is great, but only if there are enough teams able to compete. Make no mistake, it will feel different for our athletes, but if we can play, and I am hopeful we can, the reward will be worth it.”

Majority of sports are conditioning only with limited sharing of equipment allowed, and everything must be conducted outdoors. Marchael states, “The district has indicated that other sports may resume (in a modified way) when orders come from the city health department. The next restriction we are expecting to lift is indoor gym use. Once this happens we can begin to use the weight room, and basketball gyms for limited, small group conditioning.”

With at least more leisure, sports may return by next year as long as everything is safe and orderly.