

Procrastination: NCSSM students share their favorite sites to visit when not doing homework

BY: OLIVIA TRUAX

Walking down the hall yesterday, I heard an all-to-familiar conversation between two juniors. It went something like this:

Girl 1: Oh my god I am so tired. I am going to die.

Guy 1: Why? How much sleep did you get?

Girl 1: Like an hour and a half. I had a Miller paper due last block and I didn't start until like 11 last night.

Guy 1: Wait, what? I thought you didn't come to dinner with us because you were starting it, at like seven.

Girl 1: I really tried. I sat at my computer from like seven to eleven and didn't do anything. All of a sudden it was 11 and I all I had on my paper was the first sentence.

Guy 1: I have no sympathy for you.

Girl 1: I don't even remember what I did!

We will probably never know for sure what Girl 1 did for the 4 hours during which she wasn't writing her Miller

paper, but I think that I have a pretty good guess: Facebook. But, Facebook isn't the only site bleary-eyed Smathers curse during the early hours of the



Anthony Lée. Tumblr, a microblogging site, is a popular among NCSSM students, and, according to Coraline Badgett, "Can take up hours of your life!

says Chris Nellis, "You just keep clicking..." "I'll start listening to music, but then I'll be distracted by the video..." Adds Christin Green

"I'm gonna say Twitter. Follow me, y'all." - Says Anita Simha. "Twitter has to be one of the most narcissistic things ever, but I'm addicted. I deleted my facebook for college app season, but I've just ended up wasting time on twitter!" says Wynter Wolff.

"I waste time on imgfave." - Jade Lu. "I'm totally addicted, I actually spend a lot of time on imgfave during AmStud..." says another NCSSM junior.

"I go on 'I waste so much time', it's just picture with captions but I can go on for hours." says Waverly Wolff. "I go on there all the time too," adds her roommate Elizabeth Lilley.

These five are just a few of the multitude of sites available for those who have no desire to start their work on time. It's a wonder anything ever gets done with the Internet turned on.

morning...

When I asked NCSSM students what, besides Facebook, they did on the Internet while avoiding homework, here is what they said:

"Probably Tumblr" say's

I can easily get on intending just to check something and look up three hours later."

"YouTube definitely, it's so easy to start watching one video and just get lost and all of the related videos"

Courtesy of Tumblr.com

Comics infrequently studied in NCSSM classes

BY: ABIGAIL GRUCHACZ

Combining both the written word and pictures is an incredible method to tell a story, one that takes creativity from a team of writers and artists.

Watchmen by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons offers commentary on the Cold War, American social structure, and the superhero genre.

God Loves, Man Kills by Chris Claremont and Brent Anderson uses the conflict between The Purifiers and The X-Men to show how religion could be twisted to gain power and promote prejudice but could be used for a source of good and hope as well.

Maus by Art Spiegelman is a haunting memoir about The Holocaust, and is a winner of

the Pulitzer Prize. To list all the examples of comics that could be considered literature worthy of study is too monumental a task for anyone. Yet, despite all the social commentary and themes that comics have, they are not read in the classroom frequently.

They are occasionally used as historical documents, such as when Instructor Meredith Murphy uses the first issue of Iron Man and the cover of Action Comics #58 to show the racism of the era. Yet, comics are still ignored as works of literature.

Admittedly, a comic might not be studied because there is a preconceived notion that the medium as a whole is "childish." This is because comics were

subject to strict censorship in the 1950s and 1970s, so were marketed to children.

Another reason is that some of the best comics to study, such as the aforementioned Watchmen contain graphic violence, which some parents might not approve of. However, it mostly comes down to the fact that when a teacher is planning a lesson, some things have to be cut and priorities have to be ordered.

A teacher may want to study God Love, Man Kills but there might not be enough time to cover both it and a traditional piece of literature, like Catcher in the Rye.

Adding to the difficulty is the fact that the two main distributors of comic books, Marvel and DC are viciously protective of their intellectual property. They may refuse to put an issue in an anthology that is not being organized by them. Older comics, especially

those published before the 1950s are very hard to find in good condition, and if they are to be found, they are expensive.

Despite all of this, comics are making their way into the classroom. Maus, the Pulitzer Prize winning book, is studied as a work of English literature, European History and Jewish Culture in some colleges and universities.

Movies such as The Dark Knight are helping to dispel the notion that comics are solely for children. The Internet allows easy access to older comics that are under public domain.

At NCSSM, the expansion of American Studies from two trimesters to three trimesters allows teachers to increase the number of books the class can look at together.

Perhaps this often-ignored medium will finally gain the scholarly recognition it deserves.

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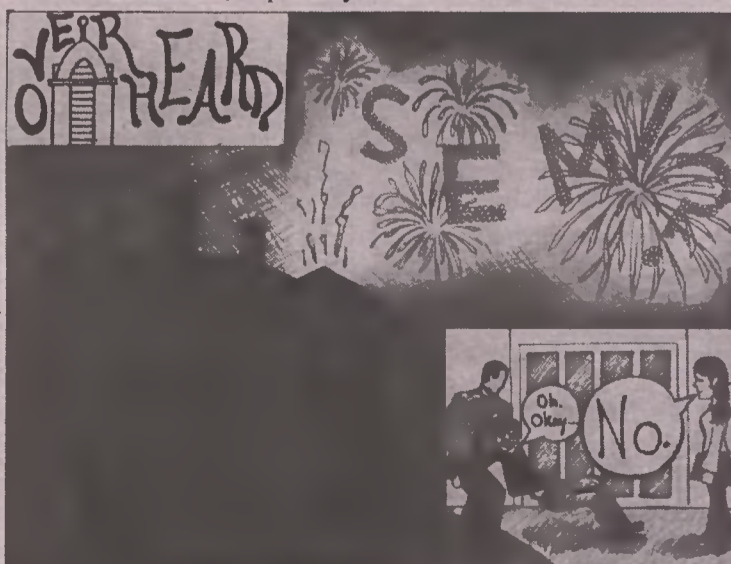
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Courtesy of Kristen Larson

Should art be a required class at NCSSM?

BY: MIA MADDURI

There is a debate on whether or not the arts, such as music, theater, or visual arts, should be made a requirement for NCSSM academic curriculum.

The graduation requirements already put in place are five trimester credits of a math, six trimesters of a laboratory science, American studies and two additional trimester credits in English, one credit of any PA course, mastery of a world language, and two to five elective credits.

Research has shown that students who take more art courses have improved cognitive function and have strengthened regions of the brain linked to attention, self-control, and focus-intensive tasks. Not only is it shown to help with these brain connections, the arts are also a way to relieve stress and add to a person's well roundedness.

Several students have been absolutely pleased with their experience with the arts at NCSSM, such as Haley Erickson, a junior, who states, "I think they should be required because they stimulate your brain, are relaxing, and are fun; a good stress reliever. So many people take part in the arts and I think that is a good reason why it should be required."

This sentiment is echoed by several other students, which would lead one to believe that this is an experience all students should have.

However, those against making it a requirement state that, because the fine arts are a means of expression, they should not be required because it would take away the freedom of creating it in the first place.

"We are a specialty school in the areas of science and math. I believe that it's our responsibility to provide a vibrant arts program for those who wish to participate, but not make it a requirement," says music instructor Scott Laird.

Laird continued to say that a large number of students taking extracurricular activities are engaged in the fine arts. Because of high amount of interest already, he said, the NCSSM administration does not feel the need compel students to take these courses.

Steve. Warshaw, Vice Chancellor of Academic Programs, agreed. "We have facilities required to provide an outlet for every student as a way for students to explore their creative talents. If they were required, they would become more standardized, but it is important for us that we make the opportunity abundantly available."