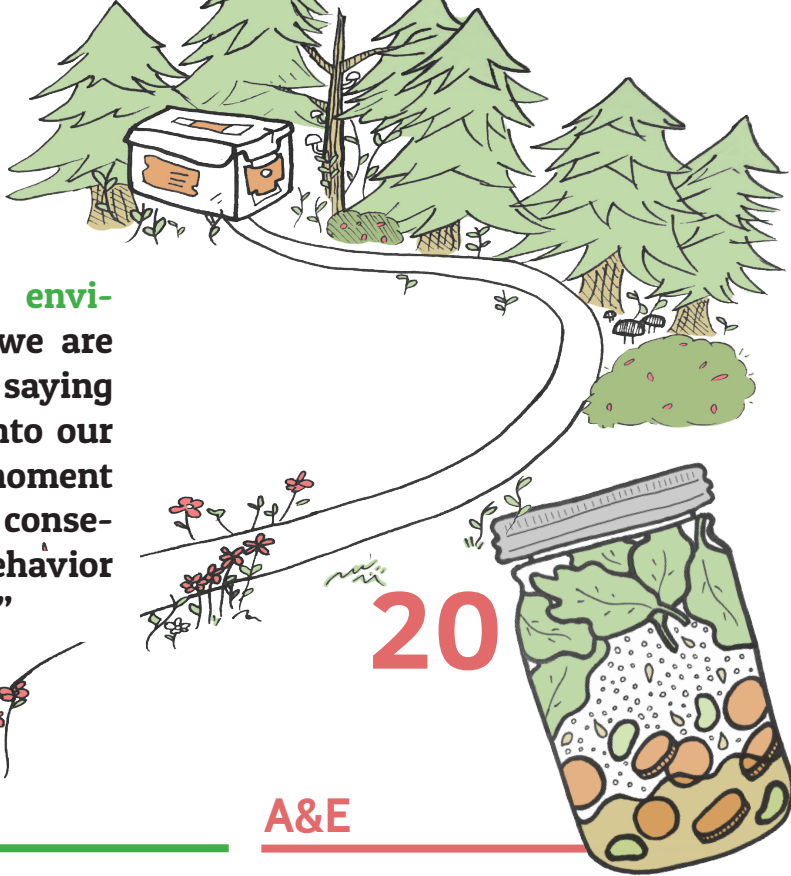




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“We live in an environment where we are too comfortable saying whatever pops into our minds at any moment because the consequences of our behavior are not apparent.”



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# Dear privileged,

Privilege is impossible to define. It means something different to everyone. If you followed our Scholastic Journalism Week challenge, you've seen how the First Amendment offers us five privileges that affect us as students on a daily basis.

Undoubtedly, there are other sides of privilege that you think about too. Like the color of your skin. Or your gender. Your ethnicity. Your family income.

But, it's unlikely that you think of things like internet access, a cell phone, or even a car

as a privilege.

That makes sense. After all, we live in Cupertino. Our city's median per-capita income

est city with at least 50,000 inhabitants in the United States.

Some sociologists like to define privilege a little bit differently. They say that privilege is the “failure and unwillingness to acknowledge benefits that one has received as a member in our society.”

So, it turns out that those seemingly universal amenities are privileges. In fact, they are arguably the most important privileges that we have.

This creates a clear problem: As some of the most privileged people on the planet, how



**NATHAN DESAI AND DANIEL FERNANDEZ**

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

is greater than our country's average household income — by a lot. We're the 11th rich-



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can we talk about privileges we don't regularly think about? Is it possible to seriously discuss things we cannot experience unless we witness them first hand?

More than being able to experience things, how do we empathize with people who live so differently from us without turning them into the other? Because it's easy for those who have less than us to become the people who we donate money to. Or build houses for. Or serve at soup kitchens.

Now, we aren't here to just to say that you are unaware, or have it really easy. We're sure you hear that enough already.

We remind you of these things because

some of the stories in this issue may strike you as not believable. Or at least not that big a deal. Something you could probably live with.

When the reality is that you would probably be miserable. You would probably resent all the people who think you have it easy. You would probably feel frustrated even towards the people who seem to care, but really have no idea what you are going through.

When you read the stories our special report staff have dutifully reported this month, we hope you take it as more than an opportunity to show pity, or to feel grateful for all the privileges you have. We hope you take it as an opportunity to see the world from a different

perspective and to understand that our experiences are narrow. To realize that we cannot fully understand what it is like to live a life that we have not lived.

So if you feel like you are privileged, there's no need to feel guilty. Just remember that despite this vast gap in experience we have the capacity to learn from our privileges.

# el estoque

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### Mission Statement

El Estoque is an open forum created for and by students of Monta Vista High School. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the journalism staff and not of Monta Vista High School or the Fremont Union High School District. The staff seeks to recognize individuals, events, and ideas and bring news to the MVHS community in a manner that is professional, unbiased, and thorough in order to effectively serve our readers. We strive to report accurately, and we will correct any significant error. If you believe such an error has been made, please contact us. Letters of any length should be submitted via email or mail. They may be edited for length or accuracy. Letters cannot be returned and will be published at El Estoque's discretion. We also reserve the right to reject advertising due to space limitations or decision of the Editorial Board that content of the advertisement conflicts with the mission of the publication.

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