

Frankly Speaking

Americans crave too much instant gratification



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The Internet, movies and other technologies have molded our generation to crave instant gratification. In everything students do entertainment is sought after.

It is as though, as a society, we never had a choice of not becoming a generation of people who need instant gratification.

This craving is detrimental to our society. It is creating a society of people who do not appreciate things that once were appreciated.

As an example, it has been noticed that literature is getting harder to teach in the classroom. Students want to be handed something that satisfies them with immediate entertainment and understanding. Books such as *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne are thought to be boring now, when once it was a turning point in literature. Students cannot immediately comprehend the book; therefore Spark Notes become the main source for obtaining knowledge.

It was not extremely long ago when students had an attention span that was longer than about 10 minutes. I observe it every day in class. As the teacher begins to talk or give a lecture of some sort, one by one students begin to look glazed over as they tap their feet on the floor and scan the classroom for something interesting to stare at.

Due to our generation's lack of attention spans, teachers are faced with the challenge of creating a lesson plan that is entertaining and stimulating. Yet, the media and technology advance at a rapid speed, which makes it harder to "keep up" with today's entertainment.

Students also want instant gratification outside of school. When students are trying to find something to do on the weekends, students may go to the movie theater or go out to eat. Yet, when these events are no longer fun or satisfying, students move on to something else. Usually this cycle could result in doing something illegal, when the good old fashion staying at home watching a movie with some friends is no longer entertaining enough. When these activities are no longer appreciated, students are more inclined to make choices that might not be preferable or legal, for that matter.

With the combination of instant gratification and the attitude of "one-upping" one another, students are never going to be fully satisfied with anything they do, unless they learn to appreciate something for what it is. What ever happened to simple pleasures, such as going on walks or going to a park?

Although our generation bombards us with media, technology and video games that are all veered to gaining our interest and immediate attention, students can avoid being consumed by the idea of instant gratification. In the future, our generation does not want to be made up of people who rarely accomplish things (due to short attention spans) or people who seldom generate new ideas because they are too lazy to do so.

Americans losing global race



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Two million minutes, four years, the amount time one spends in high school.

No matter where you live these four years equal the same about on time, but how this time is used varies greatly.

In a recent documentary *2 Million Minutes*, showed the daily lives of six high school students; two from the United States, two from China, and two from India. Throughout the documentary it became blandly obvious the differences between each nation's education systems, and you do not have to watch the documentary to feel its affects.

We, as Americans, feel entitled. We believe that we deserve certain jobs, simply because we are Americans, and that mind set is only harming us. Everyone is constantly saying "keep American jobs in America", and while I completely agree with this statement, we have to take the initiative to keep these jobs here. We have to take the steps necessary to improve our chances of securing jobs in the future.

We are so consumed in our prejudices, we do not believe that other countries can be surpass the United States. We believe that America is superior to all other nations and we believe that Americans are better than people from other nations, We do not realize that they actually pose a threat, not of physical harm, but to our future job security.

Nations like China and India are seen to be inferior to the United States but in reality the students from these countries are quickly surpassing American

students.

Students in China and India are excelling in the areas of math and science, the same areas that Americans are struggling to barely meet the standards in. These nation's school systems are creating the next doctors and engineers, but what is the American school system creating?

We know how to have fun. We know who to play sports. We know how to find entertainment and be entertained.

While all these things are important, it is important to know how to have fun and enjoy yourself, but we also have to know how to balance having fun with preparing ourselves for the growing competition against people from other nations.

We our the first generation to face this kind of competition. None of our parents had people from other countries competing for their jobs. Not only will we have more people in the same job pool, we will have more, better qualified people in the same job pool.

While there is no easy solution as to what Americans should do in order to improve their standings against foreign nations, but we can begin by finally realizing that their are other countries with people that have a better education that us, and are more determined to do what it takes to prepare them for jobs than we are. We need to ensure that we are getting the education necessary to compete in the growing global market.

Americans need to become more aware of the changes that are happening around them and do something to change our predicament. We cannot believe that everything will be okay or that we will secure a job just because we are American and deserve it.

