

# Odyssey Review

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2007-2008

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Alexandra Best  
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*Special points of interest:*

- Having problems with eClassroom? Need directions on how to submit an assignment? Call the tech support hotline 24/7 at 1-877-627-7890
- Having trouble in Math? Need help studying for the Math Proficiency? OCHS offers math tutoring with Ms. Lekostaj Mondays from 3-5.
- Computer broken? Just acting funny? OCS offers a computer repair service. Email techsupport@odysseyk12.org for more information

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## Odyssey to Hold Supply Drive

Students in some courses at OCHS will be participating in class discussions on our society’s stereotypes and stigmas associated with gender and homelessness.

Students will also be able to earn extra credit in select courses by bringing in items to donate to the Catholic Charities Men’s Shelter.

Peter Marin in his article *Abandoning Men: Jill Gets Welfare—Jack Becomes Homeless* states: “The problem of homelessness is essentially a problem of single adult men. Far more men than women, and far more single adults than families, end up homeless. Until we understand how and why that happens, nothing we try to do about homelessness will have much of an impact. [According to] James Wright’s small book, *Address Unknown, The Homeless in*

*America*. [Write states] out of every 1,000 homeless people in America, 100 or so are adults with children, another 100 are the children themselves, and the rest will be single adults. Out of that total, 150 will be single women, and 650 will be single men. Break that down into percentages. Out of all single homeless adults, 80% are men; out of all homeless adults, 70% are single men; out of all homeless people—adults or children—fully 65% are single men.”

The class discussions and supply drive are aimed to help students better understand a complex societal problem, while meeting a critical need within our community.

Items suggestion for donation: socks, underwear, undershirts, gently worn clothing, shoes, coats, blankets and toiletries.



Homeless men lined up for a chance to stay at the Catholic Charities Shelter on Foremaster Lane. (Picture

Items can be dropped off at Mrs. Haaksma’s cubicle from Dec. 3-20. Please be sure you leave your name to receive credit. A list of student names will be given to all teachers awarding extra credit.

OCHS encourages all students to participate in this opportunity to fill a need within our community.

*Be sure to check out an accompanying article by Shayla Akamine on page 2!*

## 2008 Nevada State Testing Schedule

- Iowa Test of Basic Skills will be held for tenth graders from January 22-January 24, 2008.
- Nevada High School Proficiency Examinations for twelfth graders and adults will be held January 28-January 30,
- 2008. (Retakes only)
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills will be held again for tenth graders from February 4-February 8, 2008.
- Nevada High School Proficiency Test for grades ten, eleven and twelve will be held be-

tween March 31 and April 3, 2008.

*Please watch for Ms. Mas-trachio in your homeroom classes for further information*

## Labeled: Mentally Ill

Shayla Akamine

*“And then there’s the real “emos”, the kids who can’t quite grasp why they’re still alive, who just want the world to end and can’t express themselves. People like us have learned to show the world something awesome.”*



Gotta beef with something in the paper? Write a letter to the editor! Send your beef to [nhaaksma@odysseyk12.org](mailto:nhaaksma@odysseyk12.org)

Mentally ill? Are you kidding me? That’s one of many names that people came up with for people like me. No, I’m not saying everyone has a split persona. But there are millions of people like me in the world who were born with something that makes them just as diverse as the human race. Now days, we, the young generation about to step off the map of high school and into the wide open world, have found that the world is just to big for us. But for people like me, the world is just another adventure.

Mental illnesses come from

more than just issues like mine. I may have been born with mine, but there are children who were born with this “illness” that they grow to be accustomed to. There are those who are born deaf and those born blind, but they grow to know their world well. And then there’s the real “emos”, the kids who can’t quite grasp why they’re still alive, who just want the world to end and can’t express themselves. People like us have learned to show the world something awesome.

Take a look at me, if you ever see me in person, and

you’ll see that I’m perfectly normal. I’ve left my memory in a few teachers along this ride through high school and I plan to leave behind a piece of my memory. It may only still last a few years, but I guess it’s worth all that time. I’m not “right in the head” because I’ve learned to build walls to defend others from my other half and his rage. But there’s still my creativity that’s become my “lighthouse in the storm of life” and it’s always helped me say what I can’t out loud.

*Continued on page 5*

## Editorial: Societal Effects of Teen Pregnancy

Kayla Trotter

Have you ever observed a crowd of individual’s behavior one day? Ever wonder why that person is using such vulgar language? Why that child’s mother has allowed his/her child outside the house in that inappropriate attire or why does that child not have a curfew? It is questions like these that help lead up to my subject. The law should buckle down on teenage pregnancy, because it is hurting our nation financially.

Studies have shown that the United States has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy and births in the world. This issue will remain a vicious on

going cycle if we continue to let this action be appropriate. It will get out of hand; Research has shown that the child of a teenage mother is most likely to also be a teenage parent. What will five more years look like if this behavior continues to be condoned? There will be children all ages sexually active and having children. The First Amendment states that all individuals are entitled to their Freedom of Speech. Therefore; individuals are able to conceive at whatever age they please, but observe how much it is hurting our society. How can a thirteen year old possi-

bly take care of a baby, when they are a baby themselves? They can not teach their child good morals when they are still in the process of also, learning themselves. They will not be eligible to show their child the attention that they need. The society will continue to crumble; this will lead up to higher crimes in the future, due to the lack of morals, education attention and discipline.

The future does not often hold great guarantee for a teenage mother and her child. Majority of pregnant teenagers drop out of school.

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*The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various authors in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of OCHS or official policies of OCHS.*

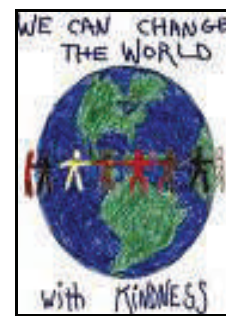
# Contagious Courtesy

Alexandra Best

Most adults and teens are impatient and think about them selves. It shouldn't be that way. Thanksgiving and Christmas are two holidays about thanks and love. Everyone is rushing around to get what they want, what they need. During these two holidays it is hectic in stores. It is almost sad to know that peo-

ple actually shove others out of the way to get where they need to go or get the last toy. It is not the end of the world if you don't get that toy or the closest parking space. You walk in the store, it wouldn't hurt to let someone else have the space and just walk a few extra feet to the door. Be generous, if not the whole year,

then at least during these two holidays. It's not about receiving gifts, it's about giving. Hold open doors for others, smile, wait in line, be patient. Believe it or not but a kind attitude and patience are contagious. Spread the love and joy throughout the holidays, it could make you feel good!



## Meet Mrs. Smith Alexandra Best

I am active and love sports like tennis and swimming, but also ride my ATV, hike, read, do photography; mostly whatever suits my mood.

*If you were not a teacher, what is it you would be doing?*

Good question. I have owned my own businesses, been a flight attendant, and worked in graphic arts. If I had the ability, I would be a writer of great novels! Or a pianist. Or an artist.

*What is one class you would love to teach here and why?*

I would love to teach a year-long class on public speaking or a semester of public speaking and then a semester of journalism, which I taught in the past.

*What is the best part and the worst part of being a teacher here at Odyssey?*

The best thing is the students I have met; the worst part is never being caught up on my grading and all the work necessary to build a good course. There is never enough time.

*If you could change or add one law in the world, what would it be? Explain.*

Another good question. I think we

*Hello Mrs. Smith. I have an assignment for publications. It is to interview a staff member and I have chosen you. So let's begin.*

*When you were a little girl, what was your dream career?*

I wouldn't exactly call it a career, but I dreamed I would grow up to be a cow-girl, live on a ranch, and chase cattle around.

*Who was your role model and what had made you choose them?*

At that same age, my role model was Dale Evans who was married to a famous singing cowboy by the name of Roy Rogers. As it turns out, she wasn't a bad role model at all because I never questioned that a woman had a certain role, but that a woman could do whatever she wanted. She was a talented actress, wrote a famous song, was very successful, and kept her own name through it all.

*What is it you do for fun?*

have plenty of laws, so I wouldn't add any more. If I could change one thing, it is to help people believe that individuals can make a difference in this world. I love the quote by Ghandi, "Become the change you want to see in the world" and (also Ghandi) "**Change** is the essence of life. Be willing to surrender what **you** are for what **you** could **become**."

*If you had the day off today, what would you be doing?*

Today I would love to grab my camera, go to Red Rock Canyon to go hiking and take some pictures.

*If you could improve the school, how would you do it?*

I would make the school day longer so students could have more time with individual teachers.

*Tell me your favorite memory of last year.*

I can't single out one memory, but my favorite experience was the many class discussions I had with my students. I encountered so much original and creative thinking and I learned so much from and about the students. That was awesome!

*Is there anything you would like to add to this interview?*

Thanks for taking an interest in my past and opinions.

# What Makes Us Teenagers?

Shayla Akamine

What makes us defined as a “teenager”? The question stands as more “do we know who we are? Or are we just here because we were sent here?” And the answer never comes easy, does it? Teenagers in the world today are more into their own worlds and not really into invading another’s world. They think they know everything, despite not knowing enough.

To define a teenager in short; they are the young, rambunctious, wild, out-of-control generation that finds enjoyment in their “invincibility” that they think they have. But to a teenager, they are defined as; the “crazy, wild, adventurous, and way popular” person that everyone

wants to be. However strong one thinks that is, it is not always the case.

We have come up with a stereo-typical teenager with black clothes and dark make-up and out-of-control hair! Because that is what is all over the big screens and that is what is all over our televisions. And in reality, that is not a teenager, because that is the image we have come to imprison as a teenager in the mind’s eye.

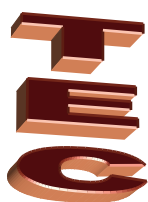
Because teenagers have been painted across the screens as something we are not, we have to deal with stereotyping. With the mindset that the world sees us one way, we cannot help but follow suite and be that mind-

lessly strangled teen who thinks the whole world’s out for our heads. But in truth, that’s how some teens think, and it scares the parents and friends who have to watch it slowly eat away at the person they have come to know.

Some of the kids who have the right treatment may be the teens who just might surprise you one day and defy all odds. Just goes to show that not all teens are as worthless as you make them, or how the movies make them. Surprises lurk around every corner and it may just be that the teenager you underestimate may end up being the one who teaches the next generation of geniuses. Who can say for certain?



*Because teenagers have been painted across the screens as something we are not, we have to deal with*



## 2007-2008 Activity Schedule

December.....Christmas Movie Night  
January.....Family Night: Wranglers Hockey  
February.....Family Night: Bowling at Santa Fe  
March.....March Madness Movie Night  
April.....Family Night: 51s Baseball Game  
May.....End of the Year Movie Night

Interested in joining TEC: Teen Entertainment Committee?  
Email Mr. Meier at [mmeier@odysseyk12.org](mailto:mmeier@odysseyk12.org) OR  
Mrs. McClain at [kmclain@odyssey12.org](mailto:kmclain@odyssey12.org)

## 2007-2008 Schedule of College Recruiter Visits

Tuesday, December 11..... College of Southern NV  
Thursday, January 10.....College of Southern NV  
Wednesday, January 16.....UNLV  
Wednesday, March 11.....College of Southern NV  
Friday, April 11.....College of Southern NV  
Friday, May 16.....College of Southern NV

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## Labeled: Mentally Ill

Shayla Akamine

The meaning of “mental illness” is more about what people are xenophobic about and how alien these people are. Some parents reject their children because of what’s wrong with them, but other’s cherish the moments they have with such life. But teenagers with ANY kind of mental disability” are really just people born to look at the world through different eyes and show us what they can really do. With two hands, they show the world just

how great they are.

At this awesome school called Odyssey, I watched my true friends shine for an eternity in the eyes of their peers. And I watched the world around me crumble and become much larger and much more colorful. People at Odyssey Charter High School have taught me to stand up after I’ve been kicked down.

At Odyssey, we, the Tech Generation, have found our path and, like water, we’re go-

ing to carve our own path through this world and show them what we’re made of. But people like me, who can’t quite do things the “ordinary way” have already broken the barrier that’s called “life”. Life is more about learning than giving up and it’s going to be a long road ahead, so, head up, hopes up, and we’ll make the world do a double-take.

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## Editorial: Societal Effects of Teen Pregnancy

Kayla Trotter

With the mothers education cut short, the teenage mother will lack job skills. The income of teen mothers is normally half of what a random person’s is. Therefore; the teen will eventually get financially dependent on their family or on welfare. The majority of boyfriends leave when their girlfriend has a baby, which leaves the teen as a single parent and unstable. Many families today consist of dual wage earners, which are a contributing factor to the lack of adult supervision after school, on school breaks, and vacation. Teens are less likely to engage in sex when their peers are more attached to school, engage in less negative behavior, live in a better environment and get good grades.

In conclusion, the law should enforce more upon the issue of teenage pregnancy. It has cost the United States over \$7 billion. In my opinion, I believe this should be against the law after this situation occurs various times. I believe everyone deserves a second chance, but to just continue having 5 or 6 children that you cannot financially afford or physically and emotionally be there for, it should be illegal. As a nation, we can no longer afford the consequences of teenage pregnancy.

OCS offers off site tutoring for all students enrolled in k-12 programs. Please contact Elaine Mastraccio at 257-0578 ext 5509 for more information.

OCS OFF-SITE TUTORING

Tuesday	<b>Summerlin Library</b> 1771 Inner Circle Las Vegas, 89134	3:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m	Ms. Salmon Mr. Patrick
	<b>Sahara West Library</b> 9600 W. Library Las Vegas, 89117	3:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m	Mrs. Cawley Mr. Plough
Wednesday	<b>Paseo Verde Library</b> 280 S. Green Valley Pkwy Henderson, 89012	3:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Ms. Lovett Ms. Allen
	<b>Aliante Library</b> 2400 Deer Springs Way North Las Vegas, 89084	4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Mr. Cunningham Mrs. Cunningham

## The Screamer

Zachary Zeitlow

one was in the bed, sleeping. Or dead. What was going on here? he thought to himself.

Gregory Lupine awoke from a unfathomable nightmare to the resonance of a woman screaming, her ear piercing blows rattling his already frayed nerves. This bothered him greatly because he despised it when he was awoken from his sleep. The screaming seemed to be coming from the attic above his melancholy bedroom. He slowly looked around, his neck stretching from one side to the other, and saw utter darkness. He felt as though he were blinded in the evening gloom. This passed a few moments later as his eyes adjusted to the light of the room and was barely able to see his bed, dressers, and night stand.

Staring into the abyss, he saw the outline of a door, constructed of dense oak wood, cut from the bark of a million year old tree in some foreign country. Dark brown and hopelessly gritty, it looked as if it were from the Edwardian era, decorative squares carved at seemingly odd intervals.

He slowly paced towards the door. Putting his hand on the rusted doorknob, he turned it and opened the door to reveal a long wood paneled hallway. The sound of the wind filled the chamber and Gregory crept toward the attic stairs, the floor boards beneath his cushioned feet creaking. It felt as if it were winter as he placed his spider like hands on the attic door. Turning the screechy knob, he opened the door and started up the stairs. Darkness hit his blue icicle eyes as he ascended onto the attic landing. A thousand years of dust blew in the air as Gregory lit a lamp and continued into the decrepit attic space.

He had hated that attic since he was a small child, where his pregnant mother would make him go and stay there and play while she went off to work for the day, his boredom greater than that of any accountant. He detested it. A thousand mornings and a thousand evening seemed to pass like decades as he played, sat, cried, fell, and jumped.

Gregory shivered in the coolness and quietly walked over the Edwardian window, arching darkly, and tried to peer out, but couldn't, due mainly to the fact that the window's glass panes were frosted over with frost like dust.

Trunks, boxes, and chests galore filtered the room. Ancient dust settled on anything that it could fall upon. The wooden floor boards creaked, screaming out to the world. Spider webs rested upon the crevices that weren't occupied. A hundred sad web like formations hustled in the wind that escaped through the torn roof tiles.

Gregory slowly edged toward a tall formation.

A wooden platform towered above him, apparently a loft of some sort. The only way to reach the top was to venture up a rickety ladder that was nailed to one side of the wooden platform. Gregory cautiously began the ascent up the ladder. It seemed like hours before he reached the top. Carefully pulling himself upon the wooden platform, he stood and surveyed his gloomy surroundings. Upon the platform was a small bed with blankets, pillows, and quilts. On the edges of one side of the platform sat a cotton wood night stand with a small wind up clock place upon it. Right next to the wind up clock stood a tall heroic candle.

Gregory didn't remember this being here when he was an adolescent. Someone must have put it here when he went off the college. But what for? What was that platform for? It seemed foreboding in it's own right. He didn't know what the damnable thing was for. He boggled his mind until he had to stop or he would have simply gone crazy, if that was actually possible. Apparently, it was.

Slowly, Gregory walked up to the bed and looked down upon it. The blankets and pillows seemed to be breathing. Moving closer, he tried to pull the blankets off, but simply couldn't. Once again, with all his might, trying to pull them off, Gregory saw movement. It was as if some-

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He truly didn't know, but it frightened him immensely. What was he to do?

Tugging once more, Gregory pulled one layer of blankets and pillows off. Throwing them to the floor, he tried to tug off more layers of blankets when suddenly a figure rose up from the bed. It screamed a thousand years of indisputable agony.

He could see its face. It was a woman. An old woman in a white ragged night-dress, screaming like a banshee in the moors of Ireland. Was she dead? She looked quite dead. Her knotted hair, frail skin, and bulgy gray eye looked at though she had passed on to a better world many years ago. Her hands were bony and looked almost like a skeleton.

Gregory quickly backed up and tripped on an upturned piece of wood. Tripping, he fell off the platform. Plummeting toward the ground, he saw his life pass right before his eyes. His birth, christening, first day of school, college, marriage, and now, possibly, death.

He hit the floor with a loud crash. Pain filled his bones and muscles. He couldn't move. Staring up at the platform, he saw the old woman staring at him. In her hand she held a large dagger. She began screaming and then laughing, screaming, laughing, screaming, and then laughing again. She pointed the instrument at his heart and threw the dagger down at him.

Pain flared in his chest and his lungs. Gregory didn't know what to do? Scream? No, no one would hear him and it was simply impossible, due to where the dagger had pierced his flesh. Try to move himself toward the door? No, he didn't have enough strength. Just lay there? Well, that was really the only thing that he could do now. Wait...wait...wait for the cloaked reaper to come. Wait for death to come to him.

He looked down at his chest and saw the dagger lodged in the cavity. Laying his head down on the dusty floorboards, Gregory closed his eyes and felt a shrugging hand tug at his shoulder. Opening his eyes, he saw that he was in his room, laying flat on his back, tears streaming down his eyes, the concerned face of a beautiful woman staring down at him.

"What happened, sweetheart?" the woman asked sitting down on his bed.

Sitting up, Gregory felt his chest and noticed a scab like bump near where his heart would be. "I had a dream, some sort of nightmare," he said, trying to calm his nerves.

"I was getting worried, 'cause I heard you whimpering and it woke me up," the woman said, sniffling slightly.

"It must have been a scary one at that, dear."

"Why do you say that?" Gregory asked.

"You kept scratching away at your chest. I thought that I would've had to restrain you, 'cause you tore part of your skin off and now you have that scab. What was the dream about anyway?"

"Oh, nothing of any importance, dear," Gregory replied. "It is all over and done with. I think we should just go back to bed and forget about all this."

"Sounds good to me, sweetie," the woman returned to her place in bed and fell into a deep slumber.

Laying awake, Gregory felt somewhat unhinged as he played the dream back in his mind, recalling a certain detail that sprang into his mind. Swaying to and fro from the corpse-like woman's neck was a gold necklace, which he gave to his mother right before she died of heart attack.

Want to submit a piece of writing for the school paper?

Email your work to [nhaaksma@odyssey.k12.org](mailto:nhaaksma@odyssey.k12.org)