

Forum

Student Opinion Matters

Are we supposed to idolize these Americans?

JOSEPH MILLER

Staff Reporter

In 2002, the first year of "American Idol" and the explosion of Kelly Clarkson's career, it was all about the singing and raw talent. It was true, heated excitement, passion, innocence and pure energy. The buzz was everywhere; all over the pages, overflowing on the net, and on every newscast. It was a positive supernova that seemed to brighten many peoples' lives. It started at the top—a true contest for the best of the best. But it has all gone

downhill from there.

"American Idol" has become more and more about the embarrassing, the strange, the scandals and the superficiality. It is all overrated, untrue drama, instead of a search for the greatest—the golden talent of one of America's citizens. This dark decline led us to today, where it is raw stupidity. It's no longer a talent show; it's casting for the most entertaining American idiot.

It's pathetic really, because people who can actually sing that audition for the show don't even have a chance. They don't even get to see the

judges. That's right—in this deceitful show, the people who audition are judged before they're placed in front of the gruesome threesome. In fact, they are judged three times (but judges who probably aren't even qualified to be judges, according to MSNBC) before they meet Randy Jackson, Paula Abdul and Simon Cowell, the judges of the show. And these "pre"-judges aren't even looking for singing ability—they're looking for anything that's remotely odd or strange.

They then encourage the "singers" to change a little

something—like putting on another mask of makeup, or maybe acting a different way, or dressing differently. The actual goal of this is to create a clown out of the singer, who has no idea that he or she is actually being brainwashed.

For those who are accepted to the next two rounds before the "real" judges, they are told to dress the exact same way. They are asked to do many ridiculous things at the auditions so they can take clips of these and then compile them at the showing of the judging round with the Three Stooges. This is how the montages are made when we watch the auditions on TV (like the ones where the "singers" sang "Don't Cha" to the camera).

Then, not only does the show encourage this of the singers, but the viewers as well. A web site called www.voteontheworst.com takes a poll for who its members think is the worst singer. Then they announce who was thought the worst, and then they tell everyone to vote for that person. One of the popular singers on the site is Sanjaya Malakar, the one who perms his hair and is a professional hula dancer. This web site is also to be blamed for the

tragic win of Taylor Hicks last season. The web site does this because the producers only let certain people in and they try to keep the worst singers in since the good singers aren't even on the show.

However, with "American Idol" being the brainless, dope show that it is, it manages to increase its viewers each year, making it to the top of Fox ratings. How is this possible? Why do people watch this show?

It was originally thought that people watch reality TV shows because they can relate to these "normal" people, or they watch these "normal" people struggle in order to make themselves feel better. But a new research from *Psychology Today* uncovered some new material on this topic. They ran a research study where they observed people who watch reality shows. From their research, they found that the people who care for status and power seemed to watch reality TV. Also, these people were on the unintelligent side who were not engaged in extracurricular activities.

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20 minutes: too lengthy to be rule

JOHN CAMPBELL

Staff Reporter

"Students are expected to be to every class on time. Everyone is to remain in the classroom for the first 20 minutes (aides included). The beginning of each class period is a critical time to be IN CLASS. Students will not be excused for bathroom breaks, porch use, pop machine, "visiting", working on computers, etc. This time is essential for accurate attendance taking."

This is word-for-word the school policy. The first 20 minutes must be used for attendance taking, and not even teachers are exempt from this. A great example of this, is if you are in a class and you're in the middle of a huge project. Your teacher has been nice and given you the period to work on the computers. In the first five minutes of the class, attendance is taken

and everyone is there. Time to work on the computers, right? Wrong! According to this rule, that extra 15 minutes should be wasted by sitting there until the clock goes a third of the way around.

Now, I understand the importance of taking attendance. I get it. We want to know who's here and who's not. But I mean 20 minutes? Really? How does it take 20 minutes to take attendance? If there is a teacher in this school who's taking a full 20 minutes to see who's absent, there is a serious problem that needs to be looked at. Twenty

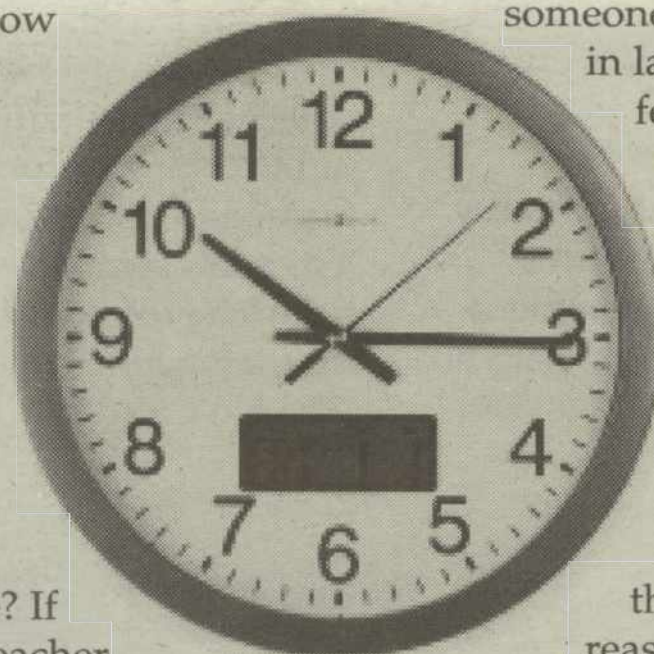
minutes is an extreme amount of time.

Now, I'm sure people would say that waiting 20 minutes gives more time to wait for tardy students. But what they don't tell you is that attendance is taken electronically and can be accessed from any computer in the school. So even if

someone is to walk in late, it's just a few clicks of the mouse to send in the attendance. I can see not letting students go to bathroom or getting drinks during this time is reasonable seeing as they just had the entire passing period to do this. But I don't think attendance should interfere with actual class work.

Because of the importance of the need to take attendance, I'm not advocating the elimination of an in-class rule. I'm simply saying that maybe the idea should be re-evaluated. I think a 10 minute rule would make a lot more sense. It would give teachers enough time to take attendance, but wouldn't take away from class activities. Or perhaps, classes that need to do activities outside of the classroom could be exempt from the current rule, i.e. classes signed up for a computer porch.

The 20 minute rule was created with noble intentions but lacks the necessary flexibility to remain in its current form. This part of our school's guidelines needs review.



Amplifier

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