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Reporter Aaron Spikol researched what the students who had been planning on taking AP Computer Science this year are up to instead.

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Opinion

Does 'holiday cheer' start just a bit too early? Is perhaps the day after Thanksgiving too soon to put up Christmas lights? Some people seem to take this stance.

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Sports

With the conclusion of the fall sports season, winter sports, such as winter track, are moving into full swing.

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Features

Learn more about the college visits held in the College and Career Resource Room. Attending these is an excellent way to learn more about the college of your dreams.

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Entertainment

Parkland's very own AP English teacher has debuted in a one-woman show. Read on to find out more about, "Freak Magnet," both written and performed by Ms. Heidecker.

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Twilight, New Moon, Vampires, Oh My!

By Katie Sheinberg

It was while lounging about during a lackadaisical study hall that I became absorbed in a surprisingly enthralling discussion with two friends about—dare I say it—the infamous T-word. At this point, three quarters of newspaper readers have just cringed and skipped to a page as far away as possible. The remaining readers have reached this sentence most likely either because they have a numb kind of disgusted interest—like that of viewing a car accident or a Lifetime movie, in which you simply cannot look away—or because they are one of those rare few people left who still tolerate it.

In honor of our conversation, I was inspired to dedicate a section of the paper to my own "Twilight ranting." I consider it my duty to give Meyer's series some closure, that is, before Parkland moves on to another piece of fiction of which to adore and then, abruptly, scorn.

From what I have observed, there are about three types of people in the world: those who are obsessively devoted to *Twilight*, those who compulsively loathe it and those who are apathetic to those who are obsessively devoted to or compulsively loathe it. It seems that Parkland's scale has suddenly tipped from the first to the second of these tendencies.

Although I can already hear the booing in the background, I admit to being a relatively big *Twilight* aficionado (vocab word). My only consolation is that I discovered the addictive series shortly after it was originally published in 2005, back when it was a fairly unknown hardcover sitting lonesome on the PHS library shelf. It has been quite fascinating to watch the progression: going quickly from being unheard-of, to having a nauseating number of copies being spotted in the hallways (and the bathrooms and on the buses), to uttering its name being somewhat analogous to profanity, almost as bad as accidentally humming the tune to "Party in the USA." It seems that, if anything, the *Twilight* craze taught us easily-influenced teenagers a valuable lesson. Obsess over something because you truly enjoy it, not because it is the latest trend.

Does the series have its problems? Yes it does. It's rather dramatized. People have called it trite. The fourth novel was a tad too strange. I also find it quite humorous that, looking back, I remember learning about obsessive relationships in health class shortly after reading it, and I couldn't help but notice many disturbing similarities to the "love affair" between Edward and Bella (i.e. the over protectiveness, watching her sleep at night from her window, etc.). I guess it just depends if you're a romantic at heart, or else a realist, who laughs at the romantics.

But, at least in my opinion, the book is well-written and entertaining, and its sudden "fad" popularity does not necessarily reduce its value as a novel, especially as it seems to have encouraged people to read for pleasure. However, I do miss the good old days when I could appreciate its story and characters without seeing Robert Pattinson posters over half of Borders. Supposedly in France, sales of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* have increased dramatically over the last few years, due to Meyer's few allusions to it in her third book. Now that is power.

This leads to some interesting questions. Has the current anti-*Twilight* era arisen because it is truly a poor piece of fiction or merely because it has grown to be trendy? If a thousand fanatical Mr. Darcy fan clubs popped up, would the perception of *Pride and Prejudice* alter? And what, in fact, makes a book "good"? One that has an abundance of motifs and metaphors, or one that is cherished by many?

I conclude with these words: to those who have always loved or disliked the series, I applaud your consistency. I also implore those who have a true aversion to the book to watch the movie, for this will provide an even better outlet for which to endlessly ridicule. And who knows? Maybe 300 years in the future, AP English students will be studying *Twilight* as the epitome of 20-21st century literature, but let's hope Harry steals that spot.

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