

BH

High School 2nd Place  
Linsley

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## The Kardashian Chasm

Quiz high school students on which Kardashian recently broke the internet with some scandalous modeling. Ask which pop star sings "Shake it Off". Chances are they will blurt out the correct answers faster than if they were asked, "In what year did the Berlin Wall fall?" However, in moments these students will whip out their cell phones, quickly google the answer, and exclaim with energy as if they remembered from history class: 1989. Today, the sick, disabled, and elderly stand on the opposite side of a chasm with no bridge to other side called pop culture. Held up in their homes and hospitals, technology has alienated them from Kim Kardashian and Taylor Swift, icons of the 21st century. In the time of only one generation, a generation of severe change and forward-thinking, we fear to look back and consequently let the past take those who have fallen, and only thwarting our obsession of speed will rescue those left behind.

Old age, disease, and disability require total commitment in order to survive and thrive, but focusing on only recovery and sustainability reorganizes priorities and puts pop culture further down on the list. They have lost support of younger generations because of a gap in interests and relativity. Because of the logarithmic growth of technology, if I missed an entire year of news and advancements, it would take me days to catch up. I would need the newest update for my phone, which has now become obsolete because a new version is out, but now nobody uses that brand because a scandal broke about insider trading. Suddenly I'm in the dark about anything that may come up in conversation, and too embarrassed to ask, I would just hide and shy away from company. It is then up to those who are able, the young and healthy, to cross this chasm because without fully understanding those outside of the modern world we grow callous in our attitude toward them. We lump those people together as ignorant, irrelative, and disposable, and we fail to see a wheelchair-ridden wife and a mother caring for her autistic daughter and a brother who slowly withers away alone in his bed.

Our support as a younger generation is required to fulfill our capacity for compassion, and this will be achieved the moment we decide that those people are more important than the virtual text and daily pictures we upload. We must take the initiative, but first we have to want it. Talking about bed-ridden cancer patients only goes so far, but the moment we see for ourselves and have a conversation with these people will be when we begin to cross the chasm. Service, volunteerism, or simply having a small chat will be the impetus needed to begin a movement when we look behind our shoulders not as paranoia but as curiosity for what we've left behind, who we can rescue, and how we will carry them to the other side.