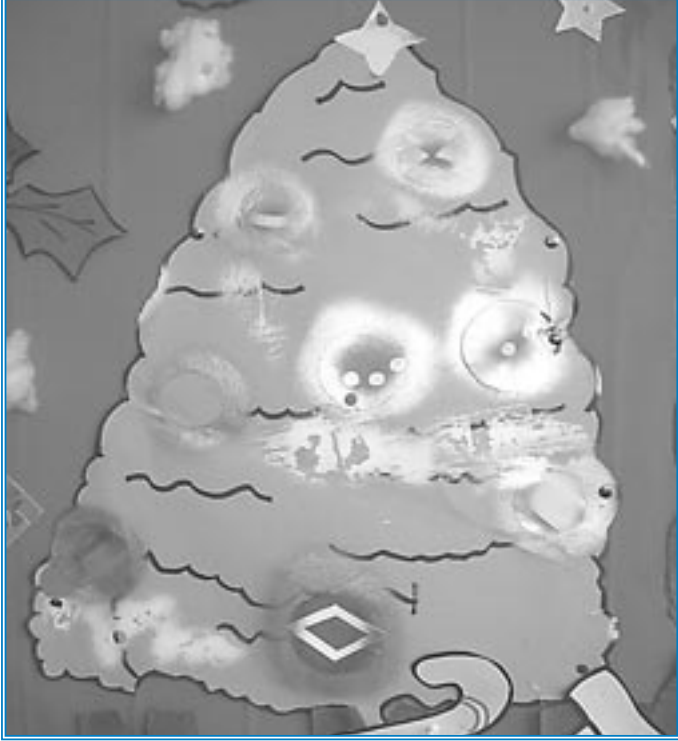




S.M.O.C. GAZETTE



Prepared by Grade 2 students

EDITO

الآنسة فملة والسيد إنسان

سأروي لكم قصة الآنسة فملة والسيد إنسان على طابة كرة سلة. تعالوا نتخيل الآنسة فملة على طابة كرة سلة، تمشي على هذه الطابة، تدخل دروباً ومفارق عديدة، تسعى دون توقف. وفي المقابل السيد إنسان على نفس الطابة، يمسي، ويدخل دروباً ومفارق عديدة.

ما الفرق بين السيد إنسان والآنسة فملة؟

الآنسة فملة تدور على هذه الطابة متخيلة أنها ستصل إلى هدف معين، هذه الآنسة تدور دون أن تعرف ما تخبئ لها هذه المفارق، دون أن تدرك أنها اجتازت مفارق، كل الطرق أمامها دروب.

السيد إنسان سيدور ويدور، يكتشف أنه الطريق أمامه دروب، سيعرف أن الدرب ينقسم دروباً عند مواضع معينة، سيسمي الدروب الفرعية، عند التقائها، مفارق. سيحرب، سيعرف أن بعض المفارق قد تكون دون نهاية، وأنها تضيّع الوقت. وسيعرف أن لبعض المفارق أنفاً جديداً، مغامرة ربّما، وأنها قد تكون الفرص الجديدة، والتي قد تضيّع إن لم نخبرها. سيصل السيد إنسان إلى هدفه لأنه اكتسب خبرة ومعرفة خلال مسيرته.

ما الذي يجعل السيد إنسان يكتسب خبرة خلال مسيرته بينما الآنسة فملة المسكينة تدور من دون فائدة؟

الإنسان يراكم الخبرة بعقل يميّزه عن باقي الكائنات، فعندما يدخل السيد إنسان المفارق، يرى أن كل درب يمر فيه يختلف عن الذي خبره من قبل، لأن عقله يساعده على اكتساب المعرفة، وبالتالي هذه المعرفة ستدرك السيد إنسان على الحقيقة، التي يراها هو، ومن يمر على نفس الدروب معه، وإن التقى بمن خبر دروباً أخرى، ربّما يتبادلات ما يعرفان، فيراكمات معاً خبرة جديدة لم يجرباها قط.

من هنا يحدد السيد إنسان هدفه، ويقرر ما هو الأنسب. الدروب ستمهد له الطريق لكن عليه أن يستخدم عقله الفعّال، هذا العضو الغريب الذي يحدد مصيرنا، وربّما يرى في مسيرته فملة تسعى في ظلمة النور، وعليه حينها أن يعرف الفرق بينه وبينها.

رانيا عيتاني

الصفحة الثاني عشر - فلسفة وإنسانيات

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Life is like a roller coaster; it has many ups and downs. There are times when the unexpected erupts and our plans are abruptly changed. It is interesting to notice how we cope with the unexpected, especially if the sudden change has a negative bearing on our plans. We all have our share of disappointments. Such experiences are hard to take, but facing them is not the end of the world. It is not even the end of the road. Who says that every setback must be final? What cannot be enjoyed today will possibly be yours tomorrow.

Many times life becomes boring and full of routine. When you are forced to adjust your plans, begin to look for a fresh idea, a new friend and another day. Remember that the road to success is uphill, all the way. Disappointments are only stop signs.

Many times we learn from setbacks: reshuffle your plans. With the delay, we have more time to be better prepared. Disappointments are only delays.

Disappointments sometimes indicate that adjustment of our priorities needs to be made. Disappointments are times of adjustment.

When a setback occurs, one should take a brief moment to analyze its reasons. The pain of the "injury" is setting the body to heal properly to become once again well-balanced physically, emotionally and spiritually. Disappointments are pace setters.

Setbacks are like clouds hiding sunshine. They are like thorns growing beside roses. Disappointments are merely obstacles.

Setbacks will tell us how we react towards disappointments that cross our roads. It will indicate what type of persons we are, and what type of persons we will become. How we react towards life shows what type of persons we want to be. How we react towards life shows what type of persons we are. Disappointments are indicators.

Setbacks, alone, don't have a positive or negative impact by themselves. By our reaction we make them either positive or negative. It's how we handle setbacks in our life that will determine our success. Disappointments are natural.

In life, different types of experiences must cross our roads since there's no possible way for the fruit of maturity to actualize without experiencing disappointments. Disappointments are necessary.

There are times in our lives when we become apathetic. Sometimes disappointments stun us and shake our lives until there is aroused in us an eager desire to spring out of our apathy into action. Disappointments are motivators.

Beloved members of our SMOC family,

On the eve of the New Year to come, we stand tired and amazed facing the CROSSROADS of the future; bear feet, empty-handed, carrying our wounded hope and disappointed hearts. Disappointments are not dead ends. Remember that the king of the mountain stands upon stones of difficulty and opposition. Victorious is that person who knows how to make stepping stones out of stumbling stones. As each stone is placed on our pathway to the top, it either becomes a help or a hindrance, depending upon how we handle each situation. Climb on top of each stone and go higher towards life in its fullness. Turn disappointment into new opportunities, and despair into strength of hope. Happy New Year.

FATHER GEORGE DIMAS



Workshops for the Preschool Teachers

Preschool and Day Care teachers of the four sister schools met together in a colorful and vibrant art workshop on Saturday 6th of November, 2004. A striking presentation done by the Art Department led to teachers' molding through clay, painting with soap, and producing their own piece of art. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce teachers to new and fresh ideas that they can use in their classrooms in order to enhance the creativity of their students through art activities. In addition, students will be exposed to different ways of presenting and crafting their ideas through different techniques.

A similar get together was previously done which targeted all new Preschool and BAC Day Care teachers who became better acquainted with the different kinds of learning centers and diverse ways of applying them in their own classrooms. Teachers then had a hands-on experience in creating a sample of their own classroom setting which consisted of the learning centers. The workshop ended with a high level of motivation from the teachers as they were anxious to try out the new strategies they had just learned.

Chantal Lahd
Preschool Assitant HOD



انتخاب لجنة الأهل في ثانوية السيدة الأرنؤذكسية

عقدت جمعية عامة للأهالي التعلّمين في ثانوية السيدة الأرنؤذكسية نهار الجمعة الواقع فيه ١٧ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٤ في قاعة الياس كوراني، برئاسة الأيكونوموس جورج دماس، وبمضور ممثل عن وزارة التربية. هدفت الاجتماع إلى انتخاب لجنة للأهل لمدة ثلاث سنوات كما ينص عليه القانون اللبناني. وقد عقدت اللجنة المنتخبة اجتماعها الأول نهار الخميس الواقع فيه ٢٣ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٤ وذلك لتشكيل هيئة مكتبها. في ما يلي أسماء أعضاء لجنة الأهل بالإضافة إلى المهام المنوطة بكل منهم:

السيد محمود جمال الدين: رئيس

السيد ناصر رمّاح: نائب رئيس

السيدة ربيعة ميّو: أمينة السر

السيدة هلا فواز والسيد عبد الحميد عمّاش عضوين في اللجنة المالية وكل من السيدات والسادة أعضاء: السيدة ديانا أبي علي، السيدة سمر علي حسن، السيدة سمر باشا، السيدة غيدا حسامي، السيدة أليسات جردعي، السيدة ندوة ممصافني، السيد ناجي مختنن، السيد بري شو، السيدة رناد شعيمي والسيدة منى طباره.



أساتذة ثانوية السيدة الأرنؤذكسية يفتتحون العطلة...

بمناسبة حلول عيد الميلاد المجيد ورأس السنة، أقامت لجنة الأساتذة في ثانوية السيدة الأرنؤذكسية حفل كوكتيل في مبنى المدرسة يوم الخميس الواقع فيه ٢٣ كانون الأول ٢٠٠٤، وقد تخلل الحفل اعلان نتائج المسابقة التي كانت قد أطلقتها اللجنة اثر انتخابها والتي تناولت موضوعات في المعلومات العامة.

وقد فاز بالمسابقة قسم البرمجة والكمبيوتر (IT Department) والقسم الثانوي.

أما الجائزة فهي دعوة عشاء في مطعم الدار يوم الخميس الواقع فيه ١٤ كانون الثاني ٢٠٠٥.



Christmas play by the Preschool Teachers

As we get closer to Christmas time, we start thinking of loving, caring, and sharing. How can we deliver these messages to our preschoolers in a nice, simple, and interesting way?

We wanted something that can attract our students' attention and help us deliver the messages smoothly. Here is where the idea of a "Christmas play" came from.

The characters of the "neighborhood" theme jumped out of the Arabic book, went up on the stage...and the story began...

The play was prepared by the Arabic teachers from the Four Sister Schools and was acted out by SMOC Preschool teachers, in coordination with Mr. Yusri El Amir and Mr. Nehmeh Nehmeh.

Preschool and Grade 1 students from the Four Sister Schools were thrilled to attend the 30 minute Christmas play on Tuesday 21st, Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd of December at SMOC.

For further information, please refer to SMOC website (www.smoc.edu.lb) where you can find the play's brochure, which includes the names of the actors as well as the story details, in addition to pictures taken from the play.



KG1 students in "Little Santas"

"Happy New Year from your little Santa" is the name of the activity that KG1 students will be presenting to their parents. Since it is Christmas time, wonderful pictures of our students were taken with them wearing Santa's hat. Their pictures will be posted on a yearly calendar that will be used up to the end of the year. That way mum and dad will be able to see their child's picture all year long.

Christmas Choir by SMOC learners

To celebrate Christmas, 110 students from SMOC Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Intermediate Divisions participated in two events with the Tenor, Gabriel Abdel Nour:

The 1st one was held at the UNESCO Palace on Saturday, December 11, 2004, under the patronage of Mr. Naji Al Bustani, Minister of Culture.

The 2nd one took place at the Virgin Mega Store in the Downtown area of Beirut on the 22nd and 23rd of December, 2004.

The students, alongside their music teacher, sang several joyful Christmas carols (in English, Arabic, and French) with Mrs. Alina Dakessian playing on the piano.

The shows ended with the warm applause of the students' parents and SMOC family members who were present among the audience.





W hat do you know about the Red Cross?

On November 4, 2004, KG2 students received a special visit from the Red Cross volunteers, as they demonstrated the different kinds of equipment they use to save our lives. Our students' eyes opened with amazement as the volunteers showed an interesting display of the helmet, the wheelchair and the inside of the ambulance. Their voices raised interesting questions that the Red Cross volunteers were delighted to answer. Finally our students waved goodbye as they called out the Red Cross number 140.

P reschoolers Days Out

N ursery

On Friday 29th of October, our Nursery students met together in a beautiful garden to observe the scenery theme of the awareness program where they picked Autumn leaves with their artistic little hands.

They crafted a beautiful collage of Autumn using yellow, brown and orange leaves as their voices filled the garden with songs about this season.



K G1

On Thursday Oct. 21, 2004 we went on an exciting trip to 'Animal City' in Ajaltoun.

We observed live wild animals there. We also looked for the signs of autumn in nature and picked up leaves, twigs and other things so that we will be able to make a collage about "Autumn and Nature" in our classroom. We definitely had a great time!

K G2

SMOC & BAC KG2 students arrived to Yuppi Park at nine o'clock, Friday Nov. 5, 2004, where everyone found a corner to gather their things.

Then students clustered around the toys where they climbed, slid, and had a lot of fun. At eleven o'clock, they had a snack break with a yummy "mankouche" and delicious juice. The day ended smoothly and they returned safely to school with a smile on their faces.



Un jour pas comme les autres

Le Jeudi 8 novembre, 2004 n'était pas un jour comme les autres pour nous, élèves du Cycle Primaire 2 (SMOC et BAC). En effet, je suis allé à l'Ice Skating Arena avec mes amis de l'école. Là-bas, on a commencé à patiner. Soudain, je suis tombé, mais ce n'était pas grave, mes amis m'ont aidé à me relever et à continuer. Petit à petit, et avec l'aide des moniteurs de l'aréna, notre performance s'améliorait. Deux heures après, une pause s'imposait, mes amis et moi avons déjeuné tous ensemble avant de nous lancer de nouveau sur la piste.

A la fin de cette journée, nous n'étions sûrement pas devenus des professionnels, mais nous étions capables de nous en sortir.

*Hassan Lahham
EB4 B*



Survivor

The Intermediate Division's outing, that took place on Wednesday, October 13, 2004 to the Animal City, was truly an episode of Survivor.

We found ourselves surrounded by animals, some of which were endangered, others injured, and many were amazingly unique.

After our encounter with the animals, we enjoyed the rest of the day with our friends from BAC. Our group survived nature by gorging food that we found (actually brought from home). Then we enjoyed hiking and explored new areas.

Nothing is more interesting than enjoying our friend's company in the embrace of nature.

*Carine Yamani Baassiri
English Teacher-G7*



G1 students at Putt-Putt



G1 students at Putt-Putt



G2 students at the Rainbow Island



G3 students at the Ice Skating Arena

Being a "Cool" teenager at SMOC

There can be little doubt about the importance of "coolness" to teens who are obsessed with "being cool": looking right, knowing how to use the latest slang, having the right friends, liking certain kinds of pop music and cloths and adopting a "cool" attitude.

Cool is an adjective that describes a person, thing or action. It has many synonyms such as: groovy, awesome, tight, sweet, hip, and neat.

Since "being cool" is so important to teens today, we chose to investigate SMOC's students (Grade 6 to Grade 12) perceptions of "being cool". We asked them to identify a cool person, and also make explicit their sources of information regarding this issue.

Methodology:

A questionnaire was constructed to investigate the above mentioned points.

The questionnaire included two parts: quantitative questions, whereby percentages of students' answers from G6 to G12 were calculated, and qualitative questions, in which students were asked to describe a cool guy, a cool girl, a "non cool" person, and name their favorite cool character.

The following table summarizes the demographic characteristics of the subjects.

Table I

Division	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL
	Number	%	Number	%	
Upper Elementary (G6)	33	49.25	34	50.74	67
Intermediate	90	52.33	82	47.67	172
Secondary	72	48.97	75	51.02	147
Total	195		191		386

What does a cool guy or girl look like? What is he or she like?

G6 through G12 students were asked to give adjectives describing cool guys and girls.

Table II summarizes students' responses which were grouped in 4 main categories: physical descriptors, personality, socio-economic status and finally the adjective "smart".

It is important to note that the adjective "smart" was mentioned separately in the table because its recurrence as a quality was noted several times.

(N.B.: the total of percentages in all of the below tables are in some cases more than 100%, because students could chose more than one answer, and in other cases less than 100% because not all students answered the question)

Table II: Adjectives describing the "Cool" guy

	Physical	Personality	Socio-Eco status	Smart
Grade 6	85 %	37 %	1 %	31 %
Intermediate	92 %	56 %	0 %	0 %
Secondary	95 %	45 %	0 %	20 %

Adjectives describing the "Cool" girl

	Physical	Personality	Socio-Eco status	Smart
Grade 6	79 %	40 %	2 %	25 %
Intermediate	89 %	56 %	0 %	0 %
Secondary	73 %	51 %	0 %	18 %

Remarkably, none of the Intermediate students chose "smart", which reflects a cognitive ability, to describe a cool girl or guy while 25 to 31% of G6 students and 18 to 20% of the Secondary students did.

It is also clear, from the percentages above, that physical descriptors are mostly thought about when describing a cool person (85% and 79% in G6, 92% and 89% in the Intermediate and 95% and 73% in the Secondary).

It is worth mentioning though that, in the 3 Divisions, physical descriptors got higher rates when describing a cool guy more than a cool girl, which shows how much the "macho", or strong male figure, is important among teenagers.

The most chosen adjectives related to physical appearance were: attractive - stylish - cute - beautiful handsome - Pretty - blond - colored eyes.

The most recurrent adjectives related to personal characteristics were: nice - funny - sociable - strong personality - self - confident - popular.

It is important to note that the adjectives used by students to describe a cool girl or guy also carried positive or negative connotations.

The findings show that the attitude of these students towards the concept of cool guy & girl is positive since only 25 students (9 from the Secondary Division, 9 from the Intermediate and 7 from grade 6) provided negative adjectives to describe a cool person. The most recurrent negative adjectives were: stupid - impolite - egoistic - show off - unfriendly. These adjectives are all related to the personal or cognitive descriptors and not physical appearance.

what does a "non cool" person look like? the adjectives given by the students to describe a non cool person were also related to personal and cognitive descriptors: *nerd, stupid, lonely, looser, old fashioned, boring and normal.* The only adjective that could be used to describe personal as well as physical traits is the adjective "old fashioned".

Who is your favorite cool character?

In order to investigate this variable, students were asked to specify their favorite cool character.

The answers were grouped into the following categories: *singers, actors, sports, media figures, politicians and others:*

Table III: Favorite cool character

Popular Character		Grade 6	Intermediate	Secondary
Singers	National	8 %	3 %	20 %
	International	34 %	37 %	6 %
Actors	National	0 %	0 %	3 %
	International	32 %	33 %	21 %
Sports figures	National	0 %	0 %	1 %
	International	1 %	9 %	2 %
Media figures	National	1 %	0 %	16 %
	International	7 %	2 %	3 %
Politicians	National	0 %	0 %	3 %
	International	0 %	0 %	1 %
Others		0 %	3 %	13 %

It was remarkably noticeable that international figures, and specifically singers and actors, played the most influential role in youth identification, across the three divisions. On the other hand, the identification with national singers was the highest in the Secondary Division since 20% of the students chose it contrary to 8% in G6 and 3% in the Intermediate Division. Secondary students, specifically identified themselves with popular singers, especially female singers, such as Nancy Ajram and Haifa Wehbe.

Where do SMOC students form these perceptions from?

The findings are grouped in Table IV:

Table IV: Least to most important media

Rank the Media	Grade 6	Intermediate	Secondary
Most important	Internet 54 % Books 53 %	TV 49 % Internet 48 %	TV 52 %
Least Important	TV 55 %	Newspaper 71 % Books 51 %	Books 57 % Newspaper 52 %

The results show clearly that all printed media are losing their popularity against the audio-visual media which are increasingly influencing the choices of youth. The numbers also showed that the older the students got the less important books and newspapers became to them and the more important TV got.

G6's results can be attributed to the fact that at that level parents and teachers' influence is more effective than it is with older students.

Moreover, these results are consistent with the above findings regarding the most favorite character since TV is the ultimate medium through which students identify their favorite characters.

How much time do you spend daily on watching TV and reading?

Watching TV for more than 3 hours/Day: 35% of G6, 47% of the Intermediate Division and 45% of the Secondary. Reading for less than 1 hour/Day: 70% of G6, 76% of the Intermediate Division and 83% of the Secondary.

In today's world, it is impossible to ignore the media's influence on how we view ourselves.

Though athletes, musicians, film stars, models and celebrities represent only a small percentage of the population; their images are so persuasive that they define the standards by which the rest of us measure ourselves and others. Children, who are just beginning to form their own identities, are particularly susceptible to the often unrealistic standards of cool as dictated by the media.

The truth is that very few people look like those on TV, in magazines... In fact some of the people we see in the media don't look in real life like their publicized images, because their photographs are altered to make them look more attractive, or they are filmed using make-up and special lighting. Despite that, many of us are still influenced by these images. Statistically, people portrayed in the media represent only 5% of the population. That means that 95% of people are being told that they should look the same way as only 5% of that same population.

This leads us to conclude that media is affecting teenagers' choices and perceptions, however, it is also commonly known that teenagers are most affected by their peers. SMOC students are not an exception; their answers to all of the above questions show that, in addition to the below numbers that support this statement:

Table V: With whom do you discuss the content of what media offer you?

	Grade 6	Intermediate	Secondary
Parents	42 %	31 %	21 %
Friends	63 %	70 %	57 %
Teachers	0 %	3 %	11 %
None	1 %	10 %	12 %

One question remains: who creates "what is Cool"?

Actually the process goes in a pyramid form: at the top of the pyramid we find *the innovators*, who constitute two to three percent of a given population. At the next level, there are *the trend-setters, or alpha consumers*, who represent about 17 percent of the said population. Trend-setters pick up on ideas that innovators come up with and claim them as their own. At the next level, we find *the mainstream* that constitutes about 80 percent of the population. The mainstream takes what the trend-setters create and adapts it to mass consumption; the mass consumer picks up on it and then actually kills it. *However the mainstream does not pick up a trend on its own: this is where the role of the marketers starts.*

"In fact, marketers are well aware of a child's need to be cool and the reference groups (namely friends, older kids and popular kids) are a major influence on his or her perceptions of what is cool. "Cool" is whatever a kid likes and wants. If he does not like or want something, it is not cool". (Del Vecchio, Gene. "Creating Ever-Cool: a Marketer's Guide to a Kid's Heart").

Therefore, today's young people are generally unresponsive to traditional brand marketing messages. What they do respond to is something "cool".

But "being cool" keeps changing, therefore, how do marketers, find "what is cool"?

Marketers, in fact, find, or try to find, "what is cool" through Cool Hunting Agencies.

These agencies recruit thousands of teenagers, between the age of 8 and 24, hired to be the eyes and ears of youth. You can find these cool correspondents mostly in malls and wherever kids hang out i.e. campus, coffee shops, movies...

The cool hunters' agencies watch the cool kids, or the alpha consumers, today, and they can tell what everybody else will be doing a year from now: that kind of information is worth a lot of money (for example in 2001, teenagers, aged twelve to nineteen spent \$172 billion (an average of \$140 per teen each week), up 11% from \$155 billion in 2000).

From a sociological point of view, there is a certain irony in the cool hunting mechanism: the person who starts trends would like to be different. The person who spreads them would like to be the one who connects the trend-setters to their friends in the mainstream. In other words, both of them see a social role for themselves, as long as those ideas are out there to be discovered. As soon as the idea is out in the open, they both then lose their social position, and so they're pushed to the next thing.

However, nowadays cool is changing so fast that cool hunters are not always right anymore: they either get it wrong from the beginning, or they do get it right but by the time they give the information to the company that hired them and by the time this company launches the product, its trend has already died and it is not perceived as cool anymore.

Some people, in this business, are starting to think that with the internet, the e-mails, the instant messaging system, the cool hunters, the trends spreading so fast...everybody will soon be "in the know" and therefore the thin line that separates the cool kids from the non cool ones will collapse and the non cool will be the new cool.

This vision is not for tomorrow and until then, kids are encouraged to feel frightened and lonely because marketers and advertisers sell them "anxiety" by always telling them that they are not thin enough, not pretty enough; they also tell them that they don't have the right friends, or they will be losers unless they are cool.

Look deeper, we often ask whether anybody ever really feels cool enough?

Finally, and as it was noted, a cool person is believed to have a lot of friends, to be attractive, beautiful, intelligent and self-confident. In fact, cool, for this generation, symbolizes power and authority. The stereotypes that we have created imply that these characteristics cannot be associated with just anyone, but only those who are more accepted by their community.

We have, unfortunately, grouped these people into cool and non cool and they now believe that is how they are supposed to be. What we don't realize is, that deep down, the non cool people also possess many of the "positive" characteristics we associate with being cool; We just don't give them the chance to express themselves, just like we don't give ourselves the time to look deeper.

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