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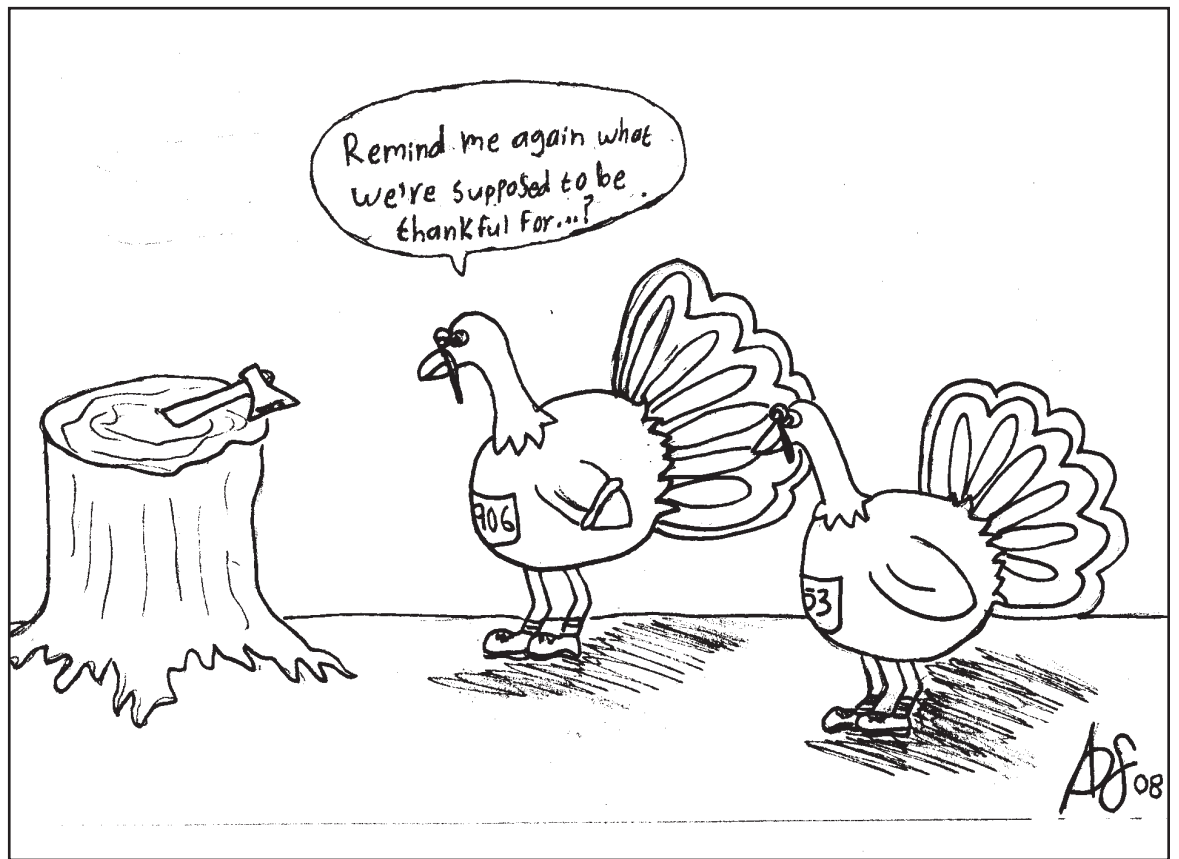


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OPINION

Dropped but not broken: survivors stay strong

By NICOLE JOHNSON
Opinion editor

Damaged folks are viewed as “dangerous” and “broken,” but we know we can survive.

How does that work? Yes, we may be damaged, but does that mean we’re “dangerous” because we’re fighters and survivors? Or are we “broken” because we’ve been through tough times in our life and people just don’t accept or understand that concept because they could never imagine that sort of thing happening to them?

We damaged folks are “broken dolls.” So, what is a “broken doll?” A broken doll is someone who creates art with his or her presence in daily life. Some would deem this as not our place, therefore making

us “broken” to society’s standards. We are less socially accepted, but contradict their judgments.

We are judged even more than your average person by those around us. Why? Because society fails to see us as actual people. They fail to see us as human beings with a purpose. They only see us as a threat. We are simply people who have been through hard times, come from difficult backgrounds, and do everything in our power to survive. People already have their preconceived notions about those who struggle to survive. They think we’re somehow not worthy enough to mingle with them. They feel we need to be confined or sent away. They think something is wrong with us, that we have “issues.” I don’t see anything wrong because “every

flower that has ever bloomed had to go through a whole lot of dirt to get there.” Think about it.

The thing about we “dangerous” people is that we are secure in ourselves and we do as we please. We are unrestricted by rules and regulations of the world around us. We’ve built strength, charisma and personality from the things that would make most people spiral downward into depression. We don’t worry about what society thinks and that brings each “doll” here for the entire world to taste our creation.

Our creation is our survival. Our creation is how we have shown that we are beautiful and show our beauty to the world. Our creation is the knowledge we have gained and how we use that to help others,

and help them see the strength in themselves.

If living through some of the worst things that have happened to me and watching my friends struggle with their own tragedies, somehow makes me broken, then by all means, I accept it. If being “broken” means not crumbling under the pressure and stress and anxiety of everything that’s been handed to me, then I accept that, too.

I am now “broken” because I am not afraid of the curve balls life throws at me. I am now “dangerous” because I can throw one right back. I am “broken” because I know how to carry myself through tough situations. I am broken because I am the flower that had to push itself through a whole lot of dirt to get to where I am today. And since that’s

what makes me “dangerous,” that is perfectly okay.

I just have one last thing to say. Next time you perceive damaged people in a negative way, try seeing things from their point of view and place yourself in their shoes. We know how to handle ourselves and we know we won’t break. If it weren’t for us being “damaged”, we wouldn’t even have strength to live. We could be weak and run away from every problem we encounter. But we don’t. Because we are the “broken dolls” that can make all the difference when you finally realize how hard life really is, and when you’ve thought you had enough, and you want to give up, you go to the only people that know how to deal with that sort of thing. Us.

This above all: To thine own self be true

By JAPNEET KAUR
Staff writer

I don’t know if anyone could know this from looking at me, but I don’t really care what people think about me. Few opinions matter, mostly those of family and friends, and there is a good reason behind this. The opinions that my family members and my friends have about me are based on actual experience with me as a person, and not on my

style of clothing, or my manner of speaking – or even my turban.

This is an anomaly in one of the societies I’m a part of. The Punjabi community of Fremont and the greater Bay Area is made up of people who care (almost more than anything else) about what other Punjabi’s think of them, and 98.749 percent of the time, they allow this to dictate what they do or don’t do, and what they will allow their children to do. This doesn’t mean that the trend of molding one’s lifestyle to impress others isn’t rampant in

“Western” society. It just means that there are more people who are like me and don’t allow others’ opinions to control their wardrobe or their behavior.

I’m sure you’re wondering by now what my point is. Well, I think people shouldn’t worry so much about what others think of them. When you go shopping, don’t always go toward the stores that you know everyone else shops at. Go toward the store that sells what you’d really like to use or wear. You might even save some

money by avoiding the top brands, because those popular styles don’t come cheap. When you’re walking around campus, don’t worry about the person who’s giving you a look that’s saying, “you look like you got dressed in the dark.” It really doesn’t matter what that person thinks about your clothes, as long as you like them.

This applies to so many things far beyond clothes.

As you read this, take a minute to think about the kind of music you listen to, what movies or television

shows you watch, what kind of recreational activities you engage in – all because you think that those are what your friends like, or those are the things that will make people think you’re cool. Maybe you listen to rap or hip-hop because that’s what everyone is listening to, or maybe you watch American Idol just so when the group of cool kids talks about who got booted, you can join the conversation and be “in on it.” Maybe you don’t want to, but you drink or smoke because it’ll

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CAMPUS COMMENT >>>

What was your strangest Thanksgiving?



Bobby Heer
ANIMAL SCIENCE

“My cousin dropped the whole turkey on the floor. We ordered KFC.”



Gabriella Castillo
COMMUNICATIONS

“[I once] celebrated Thanksgiving in a motel.”



Matt Ramos
PSYCHOLOGY

“Thanksgiving dinner at 4 a.m.”



Isabel Leon
UNDECIDED

“One year, instead of turkey, we ordered from El Pollo Loco.”



Anna Maderos
ZOOLOGY

“My cousin got drunk and ran screaming from the house with a bat.”